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Arab-Israeli Talks

Palestinian Amendments to Israeli Draft Detailed

PM0501125294 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 3 Jan 94 p3

[Unattributed report: "Text of Amendments Requested by the Palestinians To Be Included in Israeli Draft Agreement"]

[Excerpt] Cairo, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Palestinian sources in Cairo have told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the Israeli cabinet will today settle the question of resumption of the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations in Taba in light of the new Palestinian amendments faxed to the Israeli Government Friday. The amendments, consisting of eight articles, are seen as the Palestinian new and final draft agreement. AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has obtained the full details of the eight Palestinian proposals. They are:

1. The al-Nabi Musa area near Jericho should be under Palestinian control.
2. Entry to the Gaza-Jericho region should come under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian authority along with the maintenance of security, with acceptance of electronic inspection.
3. The al-Maghtis area should be annexed to Jericho in the transitional period and the Palestinian flag should be hoisted there.
4. The Musa al-'Alami project should have Palestinian identity and should come under Palestinian sovereignty.
5. The Jericho area should be linked to al-Qurunful mountain.
6. There should be agreement and coordination regarding the King 'Abdallah bridge.
7. There are no problems regarding the crossing bridges with Egypt and there is coordination on that, but where joint projects in the Dead Sea area are concerned, the Palestinians should have the right of approval, and the same thing would later apply with Jordan.
8. The international crossings (borders) should come under international supervision. [passage omitted]

Israel Submits Cairo Paper Amendments to PLO

TA0401192294 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Israel has presented the PLO with amendments to the Cairo draft paper on the Gaza and Jericho withdrawal arrangements. Our Arab affairs correspondent Ehud Ya'ari says a new document, bearing the signature of Major General Amnon Shahaq, was relayed to Dr. Nabil Sha'th. This document introduces changes to four of the clauses from what is defined as the accepted format. The changes relate to the fate of private Arab-owned land in the Qatif Bloc; the safeguarding of roads from the Allenby Bridge terminal to Jericho; the arrangements at the border crossing points in Rafah and Jericho, as well as to other issues.

Well-informed Palestinian and Israeli sources this evening confirmed these amendments have been introduced. Israel is arguing that if Yasir 'Arafat wants to introduce changes, it too can demand changes.

A Palestinian source told our correspondent the negotiations can be wrapped-up in three weeks—that is, after the Clinton-al-Asad summit in Geneva.

Conference Held on 'Challenges' to Gaza Economy

TA3012150393 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 30 Dec 93 p A4

[Report by 'Amira Hess]

[Excerpts] Sharp criticism was leveled yesterday at the Palestinian representatives to negotiations with Israel by participants in a conference of economists in Gaza yesterday for not demanding compensation from Israel.

The criticism was voiced by Hisham al-Khatib, a member of the People's Party. Al-Khatib claims the Palestinians should have demanded compensation due to the harsh economic restrictions imposed by Israel during the occupation years, which according to Palestinian economists resulted in an economic setback and retardation. Al-Khatib also mentioned the taxes levied from the Palestinians over the years, mainly in the Gaza Strip, which were not reinvested in the territories. He also referred to the taxes paid by Palestinians who have worked in Israel. [passage omitted]

The discussions, which started in Jerusalem, yesterday centered on the challenges to the Gaza Strip economy during the interim period. The first session dealt with priorities in development initiatives. It was emphasized that investments in infrastructure are a condition for encouraging the private sector and a market economy. It was agreed that only under a local-national authority will it be possible to start implementing this goal.

During the third session of the conference, which dealt with the Palestinian economy's place in the region, the speakers agreed it will be impossible to severe economic relations with Israel at once. All the speakers agreed that dependency on Israel will continue at least in the near future.

The most interesting part of the conference was the second session, which dealt with the practical issues relating to the financing of the planned projects. Dr. Samir 'Abdallah, member of the People's Party and the Palestinian delegation to the World Bank, defended the need to rely on foreign aid and emphasized the fact that the plan formulated by the World Bank is only a recommendation and that the Palestinians are entitled to propose their own emergency plan. Apparently, however, the Palestinians will adopt the World Bank plan with minor alterations. [passage omitted]

Salah 'Abd-al-Shafi of the "economic development group," a center for handing out loans for economic initiatives, claims that the Declaration of Principles preserves the status quo in economic relations between Gaza and Israel, adding that the dependency of Gazan economy on Israel will in fact only deepen.

According to him the national mission should be to quickly establish the appropriate institutions and train men who will know how to make efficient use of the funds.

'Abd-al-Shafi criticized the donors and lenders who have delayed the transfer of promised funds until the final signing of the Gaza-Jericho agreement. He said that the delay is partly caused by fear of corrupt use of the funds, but it also points to disbelief in the Palestinians' ability to manage their own affairs. [passage omitted]

Inter-Arab Affairs

Syria Said To Ask Jordan To Drop PLO Coordination

JN0401122594 London AL-WASAT in Arabic 3-9 Jan 94 p 5

[Text] Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' paid a surprise visit to Amman last week and delivered a message from President Hafiz al-Asad to King Husayn. The visitor brought along with him three Syrian surprises to Amman:

1. The Syrians asked Jordan to exclude the PLO from coordination meetings between Arab negotiators. Despite Jordan's anger with the PLO, which has refused to coordinate with it and kept delaying a Jordanian-Palestinian economic agreement, the Jordanians had some reservations about the Syrian request. Amman thinks that isolating the PLO at this time in particular could have serious consequences on Jordan, the occupied Arab territories, and Palestinian citizens.

2. The Syrians also asked for a coordination meeting grouping the Syrian, Jordanian, and Lebanese foreign ministers and negotiators, with Egypt's participation, before 15 January to precede al-Asad-Clinton summit. The Syrians believe such a meeting will give the summit a chance to discuss substantive issues, including agreement on a new round of negotiations that could produce tangible progress.

3. As for the third Syrian request, it was in response to an earlier Jordanian request to resume the meetings of the joint higher committee under the two prime ministers of the two countries.

Asked by AL-WASAT, a Jordanian official declined to answer a question about Jordan's reply to Syria's request to exclude the PLO from coordination. The official said, however, that coordination with Syria is basic and necessary.

Before leaving Amman, the Syrian foreign minister said coordination with the PLO ended when the secret negotiations with Israel in Oslo were uncovered.

Arab League Statement on Israeli-Vatican Accord

NC0401142694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1205 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 4 Jan (MENA)—The Arab League has expressed concern over a provision in the recent agreement between the Vatican and Israel on respect for the de facto situation of the holy places in the occupied territories.

In a statement released today, the Arab League said it is afraid that this might be interpreted as an acknowledgement of Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories. It emphasized the special standing Jerusalem enjoys in the Arab and Islamic worlds.

The following is the Arab League's statement today on the recent agreement between the Vatican and Israel on diplomatic recognition between the two countries:

Although it regards establishing diplomatic ties and signing agreements between states as a their right to sovereignty, the Arab League General Secretariat believes that such agreements should not ignore international legitimacy resolutions or ('cause) injustice to third parties' inalienable and legitimate rights.

In this respect, the League's general secretariat is eager to recall Jerusalem's special standing in the Arab and Islamic worlds, an established fact that has been asserted by the Arab League's numerous resolutions on all levels.

Regarding the provision in the agreement between the Vatican and Israel to respect the de facto situation of the holy places in the occupied territories, the Arab League secretariat general expresses its extreme concern lest this would be interpreted as recognition of the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territory. If we take into consideration that the Vatican has always adopted a firm stand consistent with the resolutions of the United Nations and international legitimacy on the question of rejecting Israeli sovereignty over the holy city and not changing its historic and cultural status, this new position demands that we emphasize our eagerness that this should not affect the status of Jerusalem. Jerusalem is an extremely sensitive issue for all the believers in the world. There is no doubt that based on its long history, which has been characterized by objectivity and fairness regarding the issue of Jerusalem, the Vatican will take all these factors into consideration so that peace and stability can be restored in the city of peace so it can remain a glowing symbol of coexistence and tolerance among the heavenly religions.

Arab Interior Ministers' Meeting Opens in Tunis

LD0401181794 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Excerpts] The 11th session of the Arab Interior Ministers' Council opened in Tunis this morning. The session will be held from 4 to 6 January.

Abdallah Kallel, the Tunisian minister of state and interior minister, read [Tunisian] President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali's speech at the opening session. In his speech, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali said in particular that duty calls on all Arab countries to arm themselves with the required initiative to overcome difficulties and spread amity and unity of word, stressing that the Tunisia of the new era is committed to follow that correct path. He said that as far as Tunisia is concerned, security must be all or nothing. [passage omitted]

In his speech, the head of state said that the strength of Arab society requires intensive and concerted efforts in order to prevent society from being influenced by dubious ideological trends and deviant behavioral patterns. The most dangerous of these are those which use religion as a pretext and Islam as a vehicle to resort to violence and terrorism with a view to achieving personal objectives, which are not unknown to any perceptive analyst. [passage omitted]

The agenda of the 11th session of the Arab Interior Ministers' Council, chaired by the Syrian interior minister, includes 18 items. Combating narcotics will be the most prominent among them. [passage omitted]

Saudi Minister Delivers Address

LD0401204294 Riyadh SPA in English 1313 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Tunis, Jan 4, SPA—Arab interior ministers began their 11th meeting Tuesday [4 January] in Tunis.

The kingdom's delegation to the meeting is led by Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the interior minister and honorary president of the council of Arab interior ministers.

Addressing the opening session, Prince Nayif, who is also the honourary chairman of the ministerial council, on behalf of his colleagues, thanked the Tunisian president for his constant support for the functions of the council and thanked the Tunisian Minister of Interior Abdallah Kallel for the excellent arrangements made for the meeting.

Prince Nayif also thanked the Sudanese minister of interior, who chaired the previous session for the good efforts he made and weclomed the chairman of the new session, the Syrian Foreign Minister [title as received] Muhammad Harbah and the new colleagues who join the meeting for the first time.

Citing the paramount issue of security, Prince Nayif said the required level of security should be maintained in any society as a basic element for progress and development. He underscored the top priority given by member states for security issue.

"Security is an essential element for continuation of stability and prosperity of people and our responsibility and duty is to work for harmonizing modernization and development process with security requirements," Prince Nayif told the meeting.

He said such meetings during which unwavering determination have been shown to reinforce security cooperation between the member states, despite the weak relations between some Arab states, is the tangible evidence for the common awareness on the necessity for realisation of better inter-Arab security cooperation and for creation of a suitable atmosphere that would help the concerned governments to achieve common aspiration and ambitions.

"The size of challenges imposed on our communities stipulates that we must accept the only option at our hands, that is to work together and sincerely to protect our peoples and their gains from all kinds of evils and deviations whether developing inside or coming from abroad due to the spread of sophisticated communication, and data equipments and techniques," Prince Nayif said.

The Saudi minister of interior urged other member states to follow the steps of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which has managed to protect its people from deviations thanks to the implementation of Sharia laws on all aspects of life, besides the awareness of citizens and capability of security bodies.

Prince Nayif underlined the important issues on the agenda of the 11th session and urged all participants to cooperate for the implementation of the resolutions to be adopted by the meeting.

He said the session will be held amid painful security situations faced up by some Arab countries due to the increasing rates of crimes at regional and international levels, a matter that necessitate closer cooperation and coordination between the Arab security bodies.

He said the agenda of the meeting includes the top important issues for combat of crime and drugs menace and the role of media in fighting such crimes.

Prince Nayif conveyed to the participants the greetings of the Saudi leadership and people and expressed hope that the meeting would come out with the targeted successful results.

The meeting was also addressed by the Tunisian state minister for interior, who on behalf of President Ben Ali, welcomed the participants and underscored the important issues on the agenda of the meeting.

President Ben Ali highlighted the successful achievements realised by the Arab interior ministers council since its establishment in supporting the inter-Arab joint action in security spheres.

Ahmad Salim, secretary general of the council, for his part expressed delight over the meeting and thanked Prince Nayif for the valuable moral and material support he renders to the general secretariat on his capacity as the honourary chairman of the council.

Meanwhile, Prince Nayif met at his residence here today with Muhammad Harbah, the Syrian minister of interior and chairman of the current session of council of Arab interior ministers. The meeting was held in the framework of the bilateral talks between the Arab ministers of interior on the fringes of the session.

The meeting was attended by Ibrahim Sa'd al-Ibrahim, the Saudi ambassador to Tunisia and members of the delegation accompanying Prince Nayif.

Arab Media Committee Opens Session in Cairo

NC0401120294 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0957 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 4 Jan (MENA)—The 53d session of the Standing Arab Media Committee, chaired by Amin Basyuni, head of the Egyptian Radio and Television Union and chairman of the committee, opened at Arab League headquarters this morning. Deputy information ministers from 22 Arab countries are participating.

The conferees will discuss introducing a new strategy for Arab media in the future, in addition to supporting Arab media capabilities in line with world technological developments in communications.

The conferees will also discuss confronting terrorism and extremism and supporting the Palestinian action and the Middle East peace process.

[In a similar report, Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic at 1000 GMT on 4 January adds: "Addressing the session, Basyuni said today's meeting was designed to follow up on resolutions passed by the Arab Information Ministers Council during its previous session."

["He added: We look forward to interesting discussions by presenting new notions in line with current Arab and world changes. He called for finalizing a distinct Arab information vision to deal with such changes and urged Arab media to double their efforts in the future to highlight Arab cooperation in all spheres.]

Palestinian Affairs

Negotiations Said To Resume in Taba 'Next Week'

JN0501090794 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0600 GMT 5 Jan 94

[Basim Abu-Sumayyah report from the "Israeli occupied territories"]

[Text] A PLO official has told our radio that the resumption of the Palestinian-Israeli talks on arrangements for implementing the Declaration of Principles is only a matter of days. The official, who did not want his identity known, said that tomorrow, or the day after at the most, an announcement would be released on the return of the two sides to the resumption of negotiations in Taba early next week. He added that this round of talks will last four weeks, during which time the two sides will discuss a detailed 100-page agreement prepared by both sides and including all issues mentioned in the Declaration of Principles.

The Palestinian official said that Egypt's mediation, as well as direct contacts succeeded in convincing the two sides of the need to return to the negotiations and discuss outstanding issues such as border crossings, the area of Jericho, and other less difficult problems.

The official said that the 13 April deadline for completing Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area is a firm date for the Palestinians, adding that the Palestinian side is adhering to it and will even fight to keep it unchanged.

'Arafat Letter Explains Stance on Negotiations

PM0401171094 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 31 Dec 94 pp1, 4

["Text" of letter sent by PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat to Stanley Sheinbaum, "a Jewish American leader," on 18 December in reply to a letter he received a week earlier; "service of World Panorama," Washington]

[Text] We went to a meeting with Rabin with goodwill hoping to find solutions to the outstanding issues obstructing negotiations regarding the implementation of the Declaration of Principles. Rabin came to the meeting after announcing that the declaration would not be implemented on the agreed date of 13 December.

The agreement provides for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area. Instead of complying with the agreement, the Israeli side only declared willingness to redeploy the Israeli forces in these two areas. So a disagreement ensued between us and the Israeli side and Mr. Rabin over two issues, the first pertaining to the party entitled to supervise the border crossings and bridges, and the second pertaining to the size of the Jericho area under the agreement.

The agreement stipulates that the Palestinians should have supervision of the bridges and crossing points, with a UN presence and Israeli coordination. But the Israeli side has rejected that, claiming the right of supervision for itself. We rejected that Israeli demand because it constituted a violation of the agreement and meant turning the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area into Bantustans or something like a "Red Indian reservation" with the entry and exit keys in Israeli hands.

We consider that Israeli demand to be an insult to us and to our Palestinian people's struggle for a just peace and for a historic reconciliation with the people of Israel. Furthermore, nobody would accept such a serious violation of an international agreement concluded under the sponsorship of the United States and the Russian Federation in full view of the whole world.

There is another disagreement between us over the meaning of external security. We have agreed to Israeli supervision of external security but we have rejected the deployment of Israeli soldiers on our borders because that would place us under Israeli sovereignty.

External security, as we see it and under international law, means that Israel would guarantee the security of our borders if subjected to any threat from any side on the grounds that such a threat would also be a threat to Israel's security. But that does not give Israel the right to deploy its forces on our borders as requested by the Israelis. We have suggested tripartite Israeli, international, and Palestinian patrols to guard the borders.

The disagreement over the size of the Jericho area actually shows the extent of Israeli intransigence. Under the Israeli administration, the size of the Jericho area was 720 square km. We have accepted an area of 340 square km drawn on the basis of a 32-km line along the River Jordan and a width of 10 km into the Jericho zone. The three bridges linking the Jericho area with Jordan are situated on that line.

The Israeli side insists that the area should only be 27 square km. We reject that because accepting it would mean agreeing to live in a ghetto. Would anyone agree to live in a ghetto?

We offered to coordinate with the Israeli side on security matters to allay Israeli fears. They can use the most advanced control technology. We could also use international forces from any states which enjoy Israel's trust, such as the United States, Canada, Norway, or any other European state.

At our Cairo meeting we agreed with Mr. Rabin that no comments would be made on the issues discussed but no sooner had we left the meeting hall than the Israeli officials began talking openly about what went on during the meeting. That is not in the interest of our efforts to find an acceptable solution to these matters.

If Mr. Rabin believes that he has to look after his people's interests then we also must take into consideration the legitimate demands of Palestinian, Arab, Islamic, and Christian public opinion.

We want an urgent solution to these problems, and we want the Declaration of Principles implemented in order to establish peace for our people, the Israeli people, and the rest of the region's peoples, and in order to put an end to the Israeli occupation of our territory.

Leading Palestinians Hopeful for Democratic PLO

NC0401202094 Paris AFP in English 1922 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Tunis, Jan 4 (AFP)—A delegation of leading Palestinians is hopeful that the PLO executive will agree to make the organisation more democratic, one of its members said Tuesday [4 January].

"The atmosphere is positive, but we are expecting difficulty over several points," said Nabil 'Amr, an adviser of PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat and member of a seven-member delegation holding talks with PLO officials here since Sunday.

'Arafat, who is yet to comment on the proposals, has come under increasing fire for his autocratic style of leadership.

'Amr told AFP the debate on democracy within the Palestine Liberation Organisation "has chances" for coming out with results.

A change in the composition and structure of the teams negotiating with Israel over an autonomy accord signed in September in Washington was among the demands that could bear fruit, the Palestinian official said.

The delegation, headed by Haydar 'Abd-al Shafi who led negotiations with Israel in Washington before the autonomy accord, was to present Tuesday night proposals to the Executive Committee on how to introduce more democracy and change the conduct of the autonomy talks.

The proposals come in the framework of implementing nine points included in a memorandum signed by 120 prominent Palestinian personalities and sent to 'Arafat last month.

Several Palestinian officials said that most of the executive committee members were for applying more democracy in the organisation.

But the PLO leader has so far commented only on issues related to the self-rule accord on which talks with Israel have stalled due to differences over who should control the international borders of the future autonomous zone, the security of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories and the boundaries of the West Bank town of Jericho.

Asked on how to apply democracy, 'Amr said it was "premature" to comment on the issue. But he said he was confident that positive results would be reached, taking into consideration ideas of reform already presented to 'Arafat.

However, 'Amr said he expected some opposition to a proposal calling for the creation of a consultative standing committee made up of experts that would have a parallel role to that of the executive committee and help it "accomplish the big responsibilities it is facing at this stage".

Executive Committee member Sulayman al-Najjab also expressed optimism.

There is no opposition to the call for democracy among the executive committee members. Some proposals have already been considered by the PLO leadership, he said.

Among those proposals, al-Najjab referred to a draft constitution for the future autonomy in the Gaza Strip and Jericho which he said was currently being reviewed by the committee charged with following up the autonomy talks with Israel.

But other officials, close to the PLO leader, still doubt that any result would come out from the democracy debate as they consider the move itself a struggle for power only, rather than a call for real sharing in the decision-making process.

'Ali Ishaq, an executive committee member, told AFP recently that real democracy had never prevailed within the PLO. He said such an "ideal" would only be achieved through free elections for a "constitutional, democratic, independent Palestine".

Reform Document Demands Detailed

NC0401210194 Paris AFP in English 2042 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Tunis, Jan 4 (AFP)—Seven leading Palestinian personalities currently in Tunis to urge the Palestine Liberation Organisation to be more democratic last month sent PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat a nine-point memorandum of reform demands.

The following are the nine points of the document, a copy of which has been obtained by AFP:

1 - Creation of specialized councils for pursuing national action with regard to Palestinian autonomy and also with the Arab and international worlds.
2 - Calling on qualified people and experts to form councils and the planning and executive structures that depend on them.
3 - Giving priority to professional and political competence in forming working groups and negotiating committees and teams, eliminating favouritism and clan loyalties.
4 - Working out a plan of negotiation based on the text of the (Israeli-Palestinian) declaration of principles and ensuring complementarity [as received] and coordination among the various commissions and negotiating groups.
5 - Forming a supreme authority for guiding, directing and following up the negotiations process (with Israel).
6 - Forming a Palestinian Development and Reconstruction Council (PECDAR) based on specific criteria so that it should be credible in the eyes of (the Palestinian) people and the donors of funds for building the national economic infrastructure.
7 - Finalising the work of the (PLO) legislative committee charged with drawing up the basic law—constitution—of the national Palestinian authority in a way that brings out its democratic nature.
8 - Creating as soon as possible a supreme committee charged with organising a wide national dialogue grouping all Palestinian tendencies.
9 - Creating a high consultative committee of experts with a parallel status to that of the PLO Executive Committee, which has already been weakened by the departure of several of its members (hostile to the Washington accord).

In this document, the 120 signatories reaffirm their determination to make the Israeli-Palestinian accord succeed, and their attachment to the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people.

Opposition Factions' Plan for National Congress

PM0501105894 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 31 Dec 94 p3

[Salwa al-Ustuwani report: "Call for a National Congress of Opponents to the Agreement in the Occupied Territory"]

[Text] Damascus—Four Palestinian factions based in Damascus, namely the Democratic Front [for the Liberation of Palestine] [DFLP], the Popular Front [for the Liberation of Palestine] [PFLP], the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front [PPSF], and the Palestine Liberation Front [PLF], have announced that they have a new organizational draft for the alliance of Palestinian forces. They said they intended to submit that draft to the meeting the 10 Palestinian factions were to hold yesterday evening in Damascus to reactivate the role of the coalition of the 10 factions out in the streets, in the field, and in the political arena, and also to discuss political and organizational relations with the aim of drawing up a joint political program and joint leaderships structure, as stated in a statement issued by these factions.

The new organizational draft of the four factions includes the following:

1. Formation of a higher central command of the alliance of Palestinian forces, to include two representatives from each faction. The command would meet once every two weeks and its decisions would be based on agreement among members. The command would draft bylaws to organize its work and would form the committees it deems necessary for that purpose.

2. Formation of a day-to-day follow-up command to include one representative from each faction. Its task would be to follow up implementation of the central command's decisions.

3. Confirmation of the previous decision to set up a national and Islamic command for the intifadah inside the occupied homeland, embodying all the factions which insist on the intifadah option and which reject the capitulationist agreement, to start work immediately.

4. Reactivation and continuation of the preparatory committee for the general national congress to mobilize the broadest possible front of patriotic rejectionist figures and forces, according to the following guidelines:

A. A call for a national congress in the occupied homeland to include patriotic, democratic, and Islamic forces, factions, trends, and figures opposed to the agreement, and formation of a preparatory committee of representatives of these forces and figures to make the necessary arrangements for the congress, from which a national steering committee for the Palestinian people in the occupied territory should emerge, and also to select representatives to the general national congress.

B. Full national and popular conferences in the camps and environs of the Palestinian people in the diaspora to choose representatives for the general national congress.

C. The general national congress shall combine representatives of patriotic forces, factions, and figures opposed to the agreement as well as representatives of the national and popular conferences in the homeland and in the diaspora, the aim being to continue the intifadah and strip 'Arafat and his clique who signed the agreement of their legitimacy.

D. The preparatory committee, in consultation with all the forces and influential figures, should devise a suitable mechanism for the general national congress as soon as possible, prepare the necessary documents for that purpose, and seek to crystallize political and organizational formulas that would safeguard the Palestinian national struggle in the future.

DFLP Leader Queried on Gaza-Jericho, PLO

NC0101130794 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 21 Dec 93 p 9

[Interview with Nayif Hawatimah, secretary general of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, DFLP, by Taf'at Rumayh and Mahmud Bakri in Khartoum in early December]

[Excerpts] [AL-SHA'B] What will the region's future be like after the Gaza-Jericho agreement?

[Hawatimah] I believe that the Gaza-Jericho agreement will not work out. It is completely and essentially different from the Camp David accords, which gave Egypt all of Sinai, including Taba, in return for its recognition of Israel within borders that are thus far unclear.

As known, we have been and still are against Camp David, because it did not achieve what it promised. The accord opened all the roads to the Israeli aggression and expansion in the Palestinian and other Arab territories. The settlement activity prospered all over the occupied Palestinian territories until the settlements now cover 22 percent of the lands occupied in 1967. Settlements now spread all over the West Bank and Gaza Strip. They threaten to cover 60 percent of these areas.

That is our stand on Camp David. The Gaza-Jericho agreement does not even rise to the level of Camp David, which caused all these crimes. The agreement gives only limited self-rule to the inhabitants of Gaza and the town of Jericho, with no sovereignty over a single inch of Gaza and Jericho. It also legitimizes the redeployment of the Israeli occupation troops all over Gaza and Jericho after the evacuation of the density-populated areas. I can say clearly that Taba talks that were held in Cairo involved an agreement on the redeployment of the Israeli troops in Gaza and Jericho, while keeping the settlements and dividing the Gaza Strip into four sectors, three of which are Israeli: The northern settlements, the central settlements, and the southern settlements. All these settlements are linked to Israel and the bridges and crossing gates remain in the hands of the occupation troops. [passage omitted]

[AL-SHA'B] You said that the agreement will not work out. What if its provisions are applied for some time and self-government elections are held? Will you boycott the elections?

[Hawatimah] We distinguish between legislative elections that elect a legislative council (a parliament) through which our people can determine their own destiny and the election of an executive council in accordance with the Gaza-Jericho agreement to implement the agreement and legitimize it. That is why we will not take part in the elections of the executive council, because its task is to implement the agreement and the exchanged letters of recognition. Such a council would legitimize the occupation of our country for a further five-year period.

[AL-SHA'B] How do you see the Palestinian situation after the self-government elections?

[Hawatimah] I can say now that Israel will withdraw its recognition of 'Arafat as a representative of the Palestinian people, because Israel, the United States, and the EC will deal with the executive council as the elected representative of the Palestinian people in Gaza and the West Bank. Hence, 'Arafat will be there to represent Fatah only or abroad to resume negotiations concerning the five-year period.

[AL-SHA'B] In your current position you rely on Syrian opposition of the Gaza-Jericho agreement. What if Syria supports the agreement or signs a peace agreement with Israel?

[Hawatimah] That possibility exists. This is one of the interests of Syrian policy. So far, Syria has announced that it favors a comprehensive peace and solutions and opposes independent bilateral agreements.

Syria declares that it favors full withdrawal from the Arab and Palestinian territories in return for full peace. This has been the declared Syrian stand so far. The Madrid negotiations and the Gaza-Jericho agreement have shown that the Syrians are sincere in their statements.

[AL-SHA'B] How can inter-Palestinian fighting be avoided? How can the campaign against the agreement be prevented from becoming a struggle over the figure of 'Arafat himself? What is your view of the fact that international balances of power impose certain conditions on the Palestinians?

[Hawatimah] The DFLP, the unified central leadership of the DFLP and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], the 10 Palestinian factions [who reject to Gaza-Jericho agreement], and the Arab Liberation Front—which has not yet joined the 10 factions—all have a unified position on the issues. The masses of our people might very well join this broad-based stance. Some other forces might also join the struggle against the Gaza-Jericho agreement. We in the DFLP have declared that the major conflict is between our nation—represented by all its forces, factions, personalities, and streams—on the one side and the occupation and the settlement policy on the other. Although inter-Palestinian differences are no longer minor, we must always put our conflict with the occupation before any differences among ourselves. All rifles, all stones must be directed against the occupation and the settlement activity.

We must solve inter-Palestinian differences through recourse to the people themselves via sound democratic methods. That is why we are proposing a referendum on the Gaza-Jericho Agreement. If the majority of the people accept it, we will comply and respect their wishes. If the majority reject it, then those who signed the agreement must retract and comply with the will of the majority. [passage omitted]

We oppose all forms of killing and political assassination. We submit to the people's wishes. If you are democratic, you must submit to the popular will. We have always opposed operations outside the occupied territories that were merely individual acts of showmanship because we believe that the people can liberate themselves through organized collective action. No matter how important an individual's role is, it remains limited if it does not have a social and political base. If it has such a base, it becomes much more important. [passage omitted]

[AL-SHA'B] Judging by your current disagreement with the leadership of Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, are you thinking of establishing an alternative PLO or a parallel National Council?

[Hawatimah] We are against having two PLO's. At the same time, we do not wish to hand over the PLO as a gift to Yasir 'Arafat. The PLO is not any person's private fief. We have blazed a path of political and armed struggle for 25 years now. The PLO's program since 1968 has asserted that the organization is actually a broad-based coalition. 'Arafat's wing, however, ruined the coalition and tore apart the unified national front that existed within the PLO. We call for rebuilding Palestinian national unity and the PLO's broad-based national coalition on democratic, electoral grounds that will restore the organization's legal and popular character. Its historical legality is no longer sufficient.

In this connection, we demand the election of a united national conference that will include representatives of our people inside and outside the occupied territories. We have begun preparatory steps with the hope of doing this by 13 January. The work of this conference must focus on the following three basic issues:

1. We must formulate a collective political program for the Palestinian people inside and outside the occupied territories. To ensure a return to legitimacy, representatives of all the factions opposing the Rabin-'Arafat agreement must take part, in addition to representatives of opposition groups within Fatah itself.

2. Local leaders and subsequently a unified leadership of the people inside and outside the occupied territories must be elected. This leadership will head the unified national front that will be formed by the united national conference.

3. The united conference inside and outside the occupied territories must elect a unified committee to lay the groundwork for rebuilding the PLO's institutions, notably the Palestine National Council.

West Bank Fatah Leader Withdraws Resignation

TA0401153994 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] Palestinian sources in Tunis informed our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem that PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat and his special West Bank affairs adviser, Jibril al-Rajub, yesterday called Jamal al-Dik, a senior Fatah West Bank activist who had resigned last week from his organizational Fatah post. In the wake of this contact, Jamal al-Dik agreed to withdraw his resignation. The sources said that during his conversation with al-Dik Yasir 'Arafat expressed understanding for the reasons that led to the resignation and his interest in the demands of the young Fatah leadership in the territories.

'Arafat Reading of Accord 'Went Beyond' Text

NC0401160294 Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 31 Dec 94 pp 5-8

["News analysis" by chief editor Makram Muhammad Ahmad: "Growing Hopes for the Success of the Palestinian-Israeli Talks"]

[Excerpts] It would appear that the Palestinians and Israelis are coming closer to a compromise resolving their differences over the interpretation of some clauses of the Declaration of Principles. There are indications that in Cairo at the beginning of the new year the two sides will sign a more detailed agreement to implement the Declaration of Principles smoothly and without any new problems, allowing for an Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho on the scheduled date of 13 April.

Although the latest round of talks that opened in Cairo on 28 December is going be tough and bitter, it is clear that the two sides fully realize that they have no alternative but to resolve their differences as soon as possible, and to reach a compromise ending the growing frustration in the occupied territories and sparing the two sides a desperate confrontation where mutual violence escalates to a serious point risking the collapse of the Declaration of Principles.

Rabin should have realized that he cannot, despite his rude bargains, reduce his agreement with the PLO to a limited administrative rule that firmly blocks Palestinian hopes for an independent state, and that he cannot distort the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho to a redeployment of the occupation forces in the two regions. [passage omitted]

'Arafat, for his part, should have realized that the Gaza-Jericho First declaration is nothing more than a limited partial agreement concerning the first stage of an autonomy that will be implemented in all the occupied territories for the next three years before an agreement on the final status of the West Bank and Gaza is reached. Consequently, there is no need for mixing positions and stages in a manner that adds to Rabin's difficulties as he faces an increasingly vicious internal Israeli opposition.

In the face of Rabin's stubborn reading of the Declaration of Principles, 'Arafat tried to offer an alternative reading. But 'Arafat's reading was at the other extreme, so wide and loose that it went beyond the text of the Declaration of Principles, mixed the various stages of implementation, and made the Palestinian state one of the objectives of the Gaza-Jericho First agreement.

Both 'Arafat and Rabin should have put himself in the shoes of the other so that they could reach a balanced agreement. There are limits to what each can accept now in a tense climate, mutual obsessions, escalating violence, and growing opposition seeking to foil the agreement so that violence and tension can prevail.

'Arafat cannot possibly accept a nominal withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho, no matter what Rabin's excuses and arguments about the security of Israel and its settlements. And Rabin cannot possibly now offer an implicit acceptance of an independent Palestinian state by agreeing to Palestinian border crossings, Palestinian national currency, or a Palestinian central bank. Accepting such points would mean more than an implicit recognition of the Palestinian state at an early stage that only offers autonomy in Gaza and Jericho first. [passage omitted]

Paper Decries Pressure by 'Arab Brothers'

TA0401175894 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 4 Jan 94 p 11

[Editorial: "The Palestinians and the War of Nerves"]

[Text] Apparently, these days Palestinians are being subjected to a multifaceted war of nerves aimed at pressuring them to adopt specific positions whether on the Arab level or in the talks with Israel. Obviously, the Palestinian stance regarding the issues under discussion does not please the other parties. Therefore, sometimes the Palestinian side is given a breather, and at other times it is spurned until its positions have cooked on a low fire until the pressure affects it.

Although comparison between the Palestinian-Arab dealings on one hand and the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations on the other is not pertinent, especially after taking into account the common Arab destiny and the single pan-Arab affiliation, those pressures have, however, drawn the attention of observers and made them inquire about the secret of their sequence within a span of a few days. Observers are also intrigued by the Palestinian reaction, which presumably will be forthcoming, and by the possible repercussions of such a reaction.

Palestinians have the right to adopt positions compatible with their supreme national interests just as any other people inside and outside the Arab world, particularly as those interests do not at all contradict the interests of the Arab brothers. Hence, apart from being natural and healthy, disagreements between Palestinians and their brothers are at the same time premature since the occupied territories are still subject to the authority of the Israeli occupation. Any talk about agreements, regardless of their shape or extent, is like placing the cart before the horse.

The Palestinian stance seeks an honest implementation of the Declaration of Principles, as affirmed by Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, who prior to leaving Amman stressed the need for implementing the provisions relating to Israeli withdrawal and establishment of a Palestinian national authority.

In the face of rapid developments, the Arab brothers are supposed to rise to the level of the historic and grave responsibilities and challenges and enhance coordination to confront the dangers threatening the unity of their positions and the comprehensiveness of their cause.

Envoy on King Husayn Speech, Ties With Jordan

JN0401202694 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1850 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Interview with al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, Palestinian representative, by Jordan TV correspondent for political affairs Kassab Samawi in Amman on 4 January—recorded]

[Text] ['Abd-al-Rahim] I am confident that the [Jordanian-Palestinian] talks, which will be held tomorrow, will further reinforce coordination. The Palestinian leadership and the PLO Executive Committee have instructed the delegation to act in a way that serves and reinforces the interests of both sisterly peoples. There is no doubt that we do not want to see any crack in the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship. In fact, we are keen to further strengthen this relationship, particularly at this time, during which Israeli is trying to evade its commitments to the peace process.

The Palestinian leadership noted, in its recent meeting, that coordination with Jordan is inevitable and necessary.

[Samawi] Your Excellency the Ambassador, his majesty the king reiterated in his recent speech the special nature of the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship. In light of the inevitability of coordination in this stage on the highest levels, how did the Palestinian leadership in Tunis receive the king's speech?

['Abd-al-Rahim] The Palestinian leadership discussed his majesty's speech in its recent meeting. It read the bright side of the speech, which expressed concern for holding coordination with the PLO, for crystallizing the independent national Palestinian identity, and for highlighting the PLO's role. It also highlighted the national Jordanian concern for reinforcing coordination in all fields to serve the Palestinian people's steadfastness and to ease their suffering inside the occupied Arab territory.

Therefore, we received the speech differently from the way others seem to have received it. We made a sound assessment of its content. We found that, as in the recent meeting and before that, his majesty has kept his pledge and was concerned about all these objectives. This strengthens our negotiating stand in this stage in which Israel is trying to weaken our negotiating stand.

PLO Official Receives U.S. Ambassador to Tunis

LD0401190994 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Brother Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, PLO Executive Committee member, conferred yesterday with Mr. John McCarthy, the U.S. ambassador to Tunis. During their meeting, they reviewed the latest development in the Middle East peace process, the progress of current Palestinian-Israeli negotiations to implement the Declaration of Principles, Israel's obstructions, and efforts being exerted to implement the declaration and bring about an Israeli withdrawal.

Algeria

FLN Says Dialogue 'Only Way Out' of Crisis

LD0501102394 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 5 Jan 94

[Text] The FLN [National Liberation Front] political bureau has announced that its proposals on the draft platform [for dialogue] suggested by the National Dialogue Commission [NDC] were not taken into consideration. The FLN submitted a clarification of its proposals and the aspects of its disagreement with the proposals.

In a letter addressed yesterday to the NDC chairman, a copy of which the radio received, the FLN pointed out that it disagreed with the NDC over three essential issues. The first is the major amendment of the constitution. The FLN opposed amending the constitution and considered it a basic reference point which should be applied during the transitional period. The second issue is the alternative bodies. The FLN announced that it was not interested in the bodies which would succeed the Higher State Council [HSC] and the management of the transitional period. The FLN expressed its readiness to contribute to solving the problems when a real authority is established, at the end of the HSC's term of office, which would actually be committed to solving the problems. The third issue is the transitional period. The FLN opposed extending the transitional period in accordance with the proposed basis [by the NDC].

The FLN reiterated its stance that the comprehensive and deep national dialogue would remain the only way to get the country out of the crisis.

Judge 'Assassinated'; Arrests Reported

LD0401195594 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] An armed terrorist gang at 1600 hours on 3 January assassinated Djilali Zaabane, president of the Oued Rhiou court of the judicial council of Mostaganem, in his house in Jdiouia.

Djilali Zaabane was born on 15 May 1950 in Mascara province. He had been practicing law for 10 years, and had a higher education diploma and license in law.

In another development, it has been learned from security services that security forces killed seven terrorists in various parts of the country and arrested nine others in Algiers and Saida. These people had carried out terrorist operations and killed security officers and citizens.

Egypt

Musa on Mideast Peace, U.S., Iran, Sudan

NC0401135294 Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 31 Dec 93 pp 38-40

[Interview with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa by Sana' al-Sa'id; place and date not given]

[Text] [Al-Sa'id] There has been a great deal of criticism of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement called the Oslo document. Can the agreement lead to a Palestinian state?

[Musa] The agreement was one of the major events of 1993. It does not involve only Gaza and Jericho. It is a declaration of principles between the two sides and an introduction to other developments, starting with the transfer of power to the Palestinians and moving on to autonomy and self-determination—which means the establishment of a Palestinian state.

The development, undoubtedly, is important for Palestinian-Israeli relations and the Arab-Israeli conflict. We are currently in the implementation stage.

[Al-Sa'id] But the implementation is faltering.

[Musa] Arab-Israeli negotiations are not an easy matter. Given the long history of the conflict and the opposing interests and demands, obstacles are always expected. But with the determination of the negotiators and the help of other parties, the obstacles can be removed and the agreement can be implemented. The gap between the two sides, no doubt, is a result of the great hopes of the Palestinians and the great reservations of the Israelis. It is only through negotiations, the implementation of the agreement, and the demonstration of good faith that the gap can be bridged. This requires some relaxation, such as the release of prisoners. We must not continue to live under the same old standards. The rationale for the conflict is over, and we must benefit from the new world climate.

[Al-Sa'id] The issue of the border crossings is still the main obstacle.

[Musa] This concerns the two sides; we will not interfere in this issue. Ultimately, however, we do not differ from the Palestinians' view.

[Al-Sa'id] Some saw the delay in the implementation of the agreement, which was due to begin on 13 December, as a sign that the peace talks have failed.

[Musa] Moves toward peace have not failed. Both sides are eager to see that the negotiations do not fail. They agree on the importance of reaching an agreement. The delay in implementation does not mean that the process is over or that it has failed or gone backward.

The region has indeed entered the first stage of settlement. The Palestinian-Israeli agreement is important, but it is the beginning, not the end. It has opened the door for other steps on the Syrian-Israeli, Lebanese-Israeli, and Jordanian-Israeli negotiating tracks. But all this needs care, patience, and determination. This is what we are doing. The goal is to achieve a comprehensive solution that addresses the issues of land, rights, and security.

The Palestinian-Israeli agreement is an extremely important step, not a trick or a tactic to buy time. This is a psychological change. Anyway, the agreement will be

judged soon through its honest implementation. The agreement is important. It means the recognition of the Palestinian people, the PLO, and the Palestinian land. If it succeeds, the two sides will live as neighbors, and fears and caution will disappear. However, this requires precise implementation.

[Al-Sa'id] But Israel objects to the establishment of a Palestinian state.

[Musa] No, this is not true. There is no objection to the existence of a Palestinian state. The agreement can lead to a state, and it will not be annulled by the establishment of a state. The PLO cannot be besieged and asked not to think of the great Palestinian hope—a state.

[Al-Sa'id] Which is more important now, the Palestinian-Israeli or the Syrian-Israeli negotiating tracks?

[Musa] At this stage, we are actively following both tracks. We are doing all that we can to stimulate the peace process and make progress on all fronts. This is a process that should lead to a full peace based on a complete Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories. It is up to the concerned parties to decide on a specific agreement with Israel based on all the land for total peace.

[Al-Sa'id] But do you feel that the general climate has actually changed and the region can now formulate new relations with Israel?

[Musa] The general psychological climate is obviously changing. All the parties are engaged in contacts and cooperation. We hope the talks between the Palestinians and Israel will end in an agreement that preserves Palestinian rights. We also hope that the resumption of the bilateral talks in Washington will lead to a peace agreement among all the sides. Peace in the region, with its political and economic implications, is a source of great interest to us. We are talking about laying the foundations for future cooperation. We feel a great responsibility. Things must proceed in the right way so that we do not go back to our previous state of affairs.

[Al-Sa'id] What about the Syrian track?

[Musa] We hope the next talks will produce positive results and enable the two sides to move closer to an agreement. The United States is playing a major role, and we are trying to advance the Syrian track because if there is no peace on this track, there can be no comprehensive peace. We support Syria's right to regain its territory. Syria cannot accept, and we cannot accept, any other kind of withdrawal. The implementation of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement and Israel's withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories will mean an end to all theories of expansion.

[Al-Sa'id] What do you mean by withdrawal? Are the Israeli settlements included?

[Musa] We mean complete civilian and military withdrawal. The settlements are part of this withdrawal.

[Al-Sa'id] How do you evaluate U.S. policy in the region? Some believe it upsets the balance with the Arab countries in favor of Israel. They say Israel is being supported so that it will dominate the Arab world.

[Musa] We cannot proceed from this assumption. This is in harmony with the language of today. The United States is a friendly country, and it is in our interest to be friends with it. It is not true that the United States is supporting Israel so that the latter will control the Arab world. On the contrary, the U.S. role in the Egyptian-Israeli agreement, for instance, is known by all. Under that agreement, Sinai was restored, and there was no Israeli domination. Such domination was not a price we had to pay in advance. It is not in the interest of the United States to let a certain state control the region. We are talking about balance and reconciliation, not pressure and coercion.

[Al-Sa'id] But the United States still adopts a policy that is essentially based on maintaining a strong Israel. It has recently supplied Israel with F-15 and F-16 aircraft and reaffirmed its commitment to qualitative Israeli superiority over the entire Arab world.

[Musa] This inclination is indeed reflected in some aspects. We are discussing this, and we view U.S. eagerness for qualitative Israeli superiority as serious. At this stage of peace, we must be interested in the theories of balance, not those of superiority. The region needs balance because this is what will boost security. Superiority, on the other hand, pushes the region toward an arms race, which is in no one's interest.

[Al-Sa'id] While Warren Christopher was touring the region in November, U.S. Assistant Defense Secretary Frank Wisner visited Egypt, Israel, Jordan, and the Gulf states. In his statements, he appeared to install Israel as a nuclear deterrent that will defend the interests of the United States and its allies in the region.

[Musa] Our position is very well known. We will not waver or retreat. Question marks and tension over disarmament will continue in the region as long as there is no balance. Peace cannot be maintained without balance. In order for this balance to be achieved, no side should be given privileges over the others. If the principle of preference continues, with only one party possessing deterrent weapons in the region, things will remain unresolved. Balance is needed for the interests of all sides.

[Al-Sa'id] On the other hand, a U.S. senator said during a recent visit to Pakistan that Egypt was pressured by the United States to abandon the idea of producing a nuclear bomb?

[Musa] I responded to him at the time, and I repeat that Egypt was not under any pressure to abandon the idea of producing a nuclear bomb. Egypt simply had no intention of producing such a bomb. On the contrary, Egypt has called and is calling for the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in the Middle East. This is a principled

position based on established Egyptian policy and has nothing to do with the U.S. position or the position of any other state.

[Al-Sa'id] But some people have the impression that the United States is pressuring Egypt to adopt certain positions toward some states and issues in the area?

[Musa] There are no pressures on Egypt from this or any other party. We follow and uphold the policy that we think is consistent with our interests. This applies to our position on chemical and nuclear weapons. Our positions are known and established, and there is nothing called U.S. pressure. Our policy does not stem from this or that country.

[Al-Sa'id] There are some who say that Egyptian policy is occasionally guided by U.S. signals that dictate the adoption of certain positions toward some states in the region. I mention as an example Egypt's position toward Iran and Sudan. Egypt has accused them of supporting terrorism and refused to improve its relations with them?

[Musa] This is nonsense. It is totally untrue and unfounded. No one is applying pressure on us regarding any policy we have adopted. We make our own decisions, and no one dictates any specific course to us. Generally speaking, it is not strange to hear accusations from here and there. Such accusations are made by a few insignificant voices. When a certain state—and I do not want to mention names—attacks Egypt and I respond, does this take place because of U.S. pressure? This is something strange and illogical. In our policy, we are always seeking the Egyptian and Arab interest. There are numerous examples, including our position on the peace process. But we might occasionally adopt a position that agrees with the positions of other states, such as the United States or the European states. There is nothing wrong with this. We are not bothered by such senseless remarks made by people who live in the past. We are not ashamed that our views are sometimes consistent with the views of the United States, the European states, or any other state, because these are issues of policy and not personal issues. Our policy, as I have said, basically seeks to represent the Egyptian and Arab interest.

[Al-Sa'id] Mentioning Sudan and Iran, some ask what basis we have to accuse them from time to time of supporting and exporting terrorism? Has their actual involvement in terrorism been proved?

[Musa] If an accusation was leveled, there must be proof. No accusation can be made without basis. But this does not mean that I am leveling a specific accusation against this or that state.

[Al-Sa'id] In your recent remarks about relations with Sudan, you said Egypt's intention is to achieve stability and not inflame emotions. What about Egypt's sheltering of the Sudanese opposition, and is this consistent with Egypt's eagerness not to inflame emotions?

[Musa] Egypt has always been a repository for Arabs with differing views. We have a large Sudanese community, a large Somali community, and brothers from all the Arab countries here. This is a very old Egyptian tradition.

[Al-Sa'id] Who is threatening Egypt's national security today, especially since Egyptian officials have said that the border with Israel is a safe border; the borders with Libya are the second safest; and the borders with Sudan are third safest?

[Musa] We are not in the process of selecting enemies, naming countries, and (?so on).

[Al-Sa'id] What is the current status of Egypt's ties with Sudan?

[Musa] They are not as they should be, but any issue can be resolved through dialogue. No matter what the relations are like, our stand will continue to call for preserving Sudan's territorial integrity. Sudan's control over all its territories is an important and vital point.

[Al-Sa'id] What about Iran?

[Musa] There are long-standing relations between Egypt and Iran, and the present tension can be attributed to political reasons related to the situation in the Arab and Islamic worlds. We believe in the need to create a suitable climate to improve the relationship, but we are still hoping that Iran's inclinations will shift away from issues that cause such tensions in the Arab world and parts of the Islamic world.

[Al-Sa'id] If 1994 results in a new form of Arab-Israeli relations, it is appropriate that we are hoping that this year will also see serious Arab reconciliation.

[Musa] Arab reconciliation is truly required and the Arab world must move toward solidarity and calmness. President Husni Mubarak is clear in this respect as he calls for solidarity and calm. There are moves under way, and we are trying to create a fertile groundwork to build sound inter-Arab relations. Iraq's clear recognition of Kuwait's sovereignty and independence would begin to clear the atmosphere.

[Al-Sa'id] What about lifting the blockade on Iraq? Could this happen in 1994?

[Musa] We hope so. We also hope that all the factors exist to achieve at least the Iraqi nation's interest. Iraq is a fraternal Arab nation, and we hope it will emerge from its current dilemma.

[Al-Sa'id] What can be done for Somalia at present, especially in light of the United States' decision to withdraw its forces in March?

[Musa] We have demanded a clear-cut plan in Somalia. The cease-fire must be backed; the factions should be disarmed, and then a national reconciliation must be reached with the agreement of all parties. These parties

should meet according to the Addis Ababa agreement, and the settlement should be in the interest of all the parties, not just in one party's interest. Since the U.S. decided to pull out from Somalia in March, we must act quickly to resolve this issue in the coming weeks.

As a state, Egypt is very interested in the situation in the Horn of Africa, which affects Egypt's national security because it is part of the security of the Middle East, the Indian Ocean, and the Red Sea. Therefore, we must have a say in it. The Ethiopian president has a mandate to follow the situation in Somalia, and we are confident that things will turn out the way Somali people want.

PLO's Qaddumi Continues Talks With Officials

Holds News Conference With Musa

NC0401150294 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1315 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 4 Jan (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has said he hopes the Palestinians and Israelis will reach an agreement to implement the Declaration of Principles. He said numerous problems have been solved after signing the Palestinian-Israeli agreement. He stressed Egypt's readiness to try to help overcome the remaining problems if requested to do so. The remarks came in a joint news conference held by Foreign Minister Musa and the director of the PLO Political Department, Faruq Qaddumi, following their talks in Cairo this afternoon. He said he and Qaddumi discussed the latest developments relating to the peace process on the Palestinian-Israeli track. He said they discussed issues relating to Egyptian-Palestinian coordination, noting that Qaddumi will leave Cairo for Amman tomorrow to complete discussions on Jordanian-Palestinian coordination within the framework of Arab coordination and boosting the peace process.

Musa said the discussions in Cairo a few days ago were useful and very serious, noting that a paper containing the elements left outstanding has been prepared. He said there are numerous papers and ideas relevant to the remaining points and we understand both parties' positions. He stressed that the picture is not gloomy, because both parties are concerned with reaching an agreement to implement the Declaration of Principles signed by them. He said it is only natural that such a complicated issue should involve differences in views between the two sides, noting that numerous points have been resolved and the remaining ones are few in comparison. He said he expects the negotiations to resume soon.

Qaddumi said the goal of his visit to Egypt is to explain all the developments in the Palestinian arena. He said: Our task focuses on relations between the PLO and Egypt and on completing coordination and cooperation with Jordan and Syria, because Arab coordination is an important factor that will enhance the negotiating position and maintain the peace process. He thanked Egypt for its efforts and role in advancing the peace process.

Qaddumi said the PLO's relations with Jordan are distinguished and he described 'Amr Musa's visit to Jordan yesterday as important and fraternal, falling within the framework of achieving Arab coordination. He said there is no document of understanding between the Palestinians and Israelis but ideas for discussion. He said negotiations must continue and both parties should remain concerned with reaching an agreement, which should be reached eventually.

Qaddumi pointed out that despite his opposition to several articles of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement, he is putting his hand in the hand of Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, because differences in views do not mean division, rather distribution of roles. He said PLO Executive Committee member Mahmud 'Abbas will continue to head the Palestinian delegation to the Liaison Committee meetings. He stressed that Israel's failure to implement the Declaration of Principles on time on 12 December is considered to be a violation of the agreement. He stressed that the Palestinians insist on continuing the negotiations and on honestly implementing the articles of the Declaration of Principles, highlighting that Israel should comply with this. He called on the United States to exert its good offices as a sponsor of the peace conference.

Comments on Ties With Syria, Jordan

NC0401153794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1340 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 4 Jan (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid met the head of the PLO Political Department, Faruq Qaddumi, today. They discussed the latest developments in the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations. They also discussed Arab reconciliation, restoring coordination between the Arab parties in the peace talks and the Arab League, and recent developments concerning the resumption of relations between the Vatican and Israel.

Qaddumi said after the meeting that the Palestinian side's primary concern in restoring ties between the Vatican and Israel is that no agreement should change the eventual status of Jerusalem. He noted the Greek Orthodox presence in the city.

Faruq Qaddumi said the Palestinian side is studying the agreement concluded recently between Israel and the Vatican to make the necessary response. He stressed the need for continuing the talks with the Vatican so that Jerusalem's status will not be affected by the agreement during the negotiations with Israel.

Asked about the remarks made by Dr. Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, to the effect that the Palestinian-Israeli agreement is ambiguous, Faruq Qaddumi said the Declaration of Principles calls for an early Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and part of the West Bank. If Israel wants to prove good intentions it must effect the withdrawal process. Qaddumi said this withdrawal is bound to partially improve

the stalemate in the negotiations. But he noted that if Israel does not implement the agreement it will mean that it has failed to abide by a basic principle in the Declaration of Principles.

Asked about the differences between the Palestinian and Jordanian delegations and why the PLO did not sign the economic agreement, Faruq Qaddumi said the two sides are brothers, noting that his mission in Jordan, which will begin tomorrow, aims to reach an agreement in this regard. He said Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa's visit to Jordan yesterday represents a step by a major Arab country to promote coordination between Jordan and the PLO, because Egypt's task has always been aimed at strengthening Arab cohesion.

Asked about reports that King Husayn of Jordan has given the PLO a specific time to eliminate the differences between them, Faruq Qaddumi said King Husayn does not mean specifying a time in the real sense of the word; he was urging the Palestinians on the need to reach an agreement in the next stage. Qaddumi said the Palestinians very much want to complete the agreement on future issues, especially as the negotiations will continue for a long time. Qaddumi said he believed that Jordan also wants to safeguard the Palestinian issue because millions of Palestinians have long been living in Jordan.

Asked about Palestinian-Syrian coordination during the next stage, Faruq Qaddumi said: We eliminated the past estrangement and recent differences because we understand that Syria has a big heart and adopted the Palestinian cause right from the start. He added: If there are clouds in the relations with Syria, we and our brothers in Syria can eliminate the misunderstanding.

Continuing, Qaddumi ruled out the possibility of holding a summit meeting between Hafiz al-Asad and Yasir 'Arafat before President al-Asad's meeting with U.S. President Bill Clinton in Geneva in the middle of January. He said a summit between al-Asad and 'Arafat could be held later. He stressed that Syria is playing a basic role in the current peaceful settlement.

Asked whether the Palestinian side can give more concessions for the sake of reaching an agreement with Israel, Qaddumi said: We have no more concessions to make. Israel must make concessions. He said that no matter what Israeli Prime Minister Rabin says about reexamining the agreement, he is the loser, because we all know history is not proceeding in Israel's favor.

Minister: Slandering Religion 'Unacceptable'

NC0501114294 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2130 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Ismailia, 4 Jan (MENA)—Awqaf Minister Dr. Muhammad 'Ali Mahjub asserted that Islam is innocent of sabotage, destruction, and the killing of innocents and that some young people's attempt to justify their crimes as being a defense of Islam is a great crime against religion itself.

During a popular rally in Ismailia today, the Awqaf minister said that a stable Egypt that is influential on the world stage is a safety valve for the Arab and Islamic worlds. He stressed that Egypt's leading role in the Islamic world will not ebb because the country is greater than any attempt to undermine it. He said such attempts will merely serve to enhance its role.

Mahjub added that everyone must know that Egypt has no designs on others, that history is witness to this, and that it is only concerned with the security of its sister countries.

He urged the nation's ulema, in the name of Islam, to seek to unite the nation's ranks and protect its ideology, declaring that any negligence in this sphere is a crime against religion and the homeland.

Regarding freedom in Islam, Mahjub said that freedom in Islam means commitment and good behavior, not chaos and disunity.

He added that any attempt to slander religion is a call to dismember the homeland and cannot be termed freedom of expression. Mahjub said: Slandering religion is as unacceptable as terrorism under the guise of religion.

Minister Rules Out Dialogue with Terrorists

NC0501114794 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 31 Dec 93 p 6

[Report by Muhammad Fathallah]

[Excerpt] Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif has affirmed that there can be no dialogue with terrorists because they are a group of schemers funded from abroad, similar to the German gangs. Their objective is to strike at political stability in Egypt and try to weaken its economy. They hide behind Islam although they are a misguided group. The majority of the Egyptian people are Muslim and do not need guardians or someone to teach them about Islam.

He said that the issue of terrorism in Egypt is different from the issue of terrorism in Algeria, where the terrorist groups succeeded in getting into parliament. But in Egypt the terrorists have failed to get into the People's Assembly or Consultative Council. They have also failed to infiltrate the ranks of the Army, security forces, and large institutions.

In addition, the terrorist phenomenon in Egypt is different from that in the United Kingdom, for example, due to the presence of the shadow government and some form of Irish independence from the United Kingdom.

Al-Sharif said this in answer to a question posed by an African journalist about the parallels between terrorism in Egypt and Algeria and the possibility of holding a

dialogue with the terrorists in Egypt to reach a peaceful solution, such as that going on now between the United Kingdom and Ireland.

During his meeting with the members of the conference of the African Journalists Office under the chairmanship of Mahfuz al-Ansari, head of the African Journalists Union and chief editor of AL-JUMHURIYAH, al-Sharif added that there are 440 seats in the People's Assembly, representing all political trends. None of them belong to the groups that describe themselves as Islamic. None of the so-called Islamic groups have managed to get into the opposition parties such as the National Progressive Unionist Grouping Party, the Wafd Party, and the Labor Party. He noted that the Muslim Brotherhood are represented by only 12 members out of the 43 members from the Labor Party; and they succeeded only because they belong to big families and tribes in the rural areas. He said the National Democratic Party has given opportunities to people from all political currents in Egypt, considering that 33,000 citizens ran in the elections. [passage omitted]

Consultative Council Meeting Discusses Democracy

NC0401213094 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1815 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 4 Jan (MENA)—The Consultative Council meeting today was the scene of heated discussions about democracy in Egypt. The members were discussing a special committee report on President Husni Mubarak's statement to a joint People's Assembly and Consultative Council session on 12 November when the new parliamentary term began.

Independent deputy Muhammad 'Abd-al-Shafi voiced opposition to the committee's report and to the restoration of the system of appointing village heads and mukhtars. He urged the government to permit the rotation of power.

Dr. Muhammad Zaki Abu-'Amir, minister of state for People's Assembly and Consultative Council Affairs, commented on this by saying: No one could have imagined that a parliamentarian would speak of the rotation of power without also noting that this is done via the ballot box, not by a government decision.

He explained that political party activity does not only mean congresses held in public squares. He added that certain public and security circumstances might bar holding such congresses, even in the case of the majority party [ruling Democratic National Party].

On the appointment of village heads and mukhtars, Dr. Abu-'Amir said the pertinent bill will be submitted to the People's Assembly which will then decide whether these officials will be elected or appointed.

Regarding a comment by Consultative Council Deputy Speaker Tharwat Abazah about the rising price of printing material because of higher tariffs, Dr. Abu-'Amir said that this decision will be studied again in light of recommendations made by the People's Assembly's Industry and Culture Committees.

Consultative Council Speaker Dr. Mustafa Kamal Hilmi commented on the point raised by deputy 'Abd-al-Shafi, saying: You describe our democracy as marginal. Now President Mubarak never said we have reached the apex of democracy. He said we are seeking to entrench democracy.

Dr. Hilmi urged the members to be fair and just, pointing out that during President Mubarak's term opposition newspapers could say no to his reelection without feeling insecure. The president accepted this broadmindedly and has met with those who said yes and those who said no.

Italian Foreign Minister Arrives in Cairo 4 Jan

NC0501055894 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2230 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Cairo, 4 Jan (MENA)—Italian Foreign Minister Beniamino Andreatta arrived in Cairo this evening on a two-day visit to Egypt at the invitation of Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa.

Talks between the Egyptian and Italian foreign ministers are expected to begin tomorrow. They will focus on bilateral relations and international and regional issues of common interest, especially the Middle East peace process, the Somali problem, and the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. [passage omitted]

Military Talks With Omani Delegation Begin

NC0401135294 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1215 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 4 Jan (MENA)—Minister of Defense and War Production Field Marshal Muhammad Husayn Tantawi today received Staff Lieutenant General Khamis Bin-Hamad al-Kalbani, chief of staff of the Omani Armed Forces, and his accompanying delegation, who are currently visting Cairo.

The Egyptian-Omani military talks began at the Defense Ministry at noon today. The Egyptian side was headed by Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Salah Halabi and the Omani side by Staff Lt. Gen. Khamis Bin-Hamad al-Kalbani. The talks dealt with aspects and areas of military cooperation between the two countries, ways of promoting bilateral ties, and the exchange of expertise between the armed forces of the two countries. Staff Lt. Gen. al-Kalbani arrived in Cairo yesterday evening on a visit to Egypt at the invitation of Lt. Gen. al-Halabi.

Sudan

Speaker: Decision To Expel UK Envoy 'Final'

EA0401190894 Khartoum SUNA in English 1615 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Khartoum, 4 Jan (SUNA)—Speaker of the Transitional National Assembly (TNA) Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah has confirmed that Sudan's decision to expel the British ambassador is final, because he endeavoured to sabotage the relations between Sudan and Britain and he is declared as a person of non grata [as received] and will not come back to Sudan again.

"If the British Government wanted to promote its relations with Sudan it must appoint another ambassador whose task is to promote the relations between the two countries", Khalifah said. He added that we advise and not interfere with others' affairs, and confirm that the British Government has to make sure that its new ambassador to here must be a believer of all religions and qualified to work for the best of the two countries.

He said that Sudan is independent in its political, economic and social decision and no power in the world can make us change our declared policy.

Foreign Minister on Relations With Britain

LD0401134294 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Excerpts] In the Foreign Ministry's regular briefing this morning, Foreign Minister Dr. Husayn Sulayman Abu Salih reviewed Sudanese-Eritrean relations. [passage omitted]

The minister also talked about Sudanese-British relations, pointing out that these relations are historic and all the problems between the two countries could be solved through dialogue.

The minister referred to the wrong behavior by the British ambassador to Khartoum and asked Britain to send a new ambassador who would work toward strengthening relations between the two countries.

The minister also talked about the archbishop of Canterbury's visit to the rebel areas. He said the visit was seen as support for mutiny, a violation of national sovereignty, and a call to war. He also said that the visit contributed to the deterioration of Sudanese-British relations. He described the archbishop's action as a political one on whose basis the thesis of mutiny would be built. [passage omitted]

Further on Foreign Minister's Remarks

LD0401165594 Omdurman Sudan Television in English 1600 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Excerpts] The weekly forum of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs convened today. Foreign Minister Dr. Husayn Sulayman Abu Salih spoke at the forum, reviewing Sudanese-Eritrean relations, Sudanese-British relations, the visit of the archbishop of Canterbury and the visit of the deputy president of the Chinese state council and minister of foreign affairs to the Sudan. [passage omitted]

Speaking about Sudanese-British relations, the minister of foreign affairs reviewed the past history of relations with Britain and emphasized that relations with the West need to be based on adequate foundations through dialogue for the benefit of both sides, as seen by the British crown prince.

The foreign minister said that the expulsion of the British ambassador is final, as the ambassador no more serves the interests of relations between the two countries and has become an obstacle in the way of bilateral relations. He said that the decision does not mean the failure or cutting off of relations, but that the situation requires the appointment of an ambassador who believes in the importance of these relations.

As to the visit of the archbishop of Canterbury to the Sudan, the minister said that the invitation was extended by the Sudanese Episcopal Church, which groups 17 bishops, and that the invitation was not extended by the rebel movement. He said the archbishop rejected the invitation of the Sudanese Church and contacted the factions of the rebel movement at their sites in the Sudanese border areas held by the rebels, indicating that such a visit is considered a violation of the national sovereignty of the Sudan and a backing of the rebel movement, thus a contribution in the deterioration of relations between the two countries. The foreign affairs minister wondered whether the British officials would allow an Islamic leader to visit Ireland and talk with the leaders of the IRA. [passage omitted]

Tunisia

Kuwaiti Interior Minister on Talks With Ben Yahya

LD0301221494 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 2100 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Shaykh Ahmad al-Hamud al-Jabir al-Sabah, the interior minister, described the talks he held this evening in Tunis with Tunisian Foreign Affairs Minister Habib Ben Yahya, which dealt with Tunisia's stance toward the Iraqi invasion of the State of Kuwait and the respective UN Security Council resolutions, as serious and excellent.

The interior minister said, in a statement to KUNA, that Ben Yahya expressed his country's support for UN resolutions in connection with the unjust Iraqi aggression against the State of Kuwait, in particular, the two

resolutions on the demarcation of the border and the resolution calling for the release of Kuwaiti prisoners and detainees.

Shaykh Ahmad al-Hamud al-Jabir al-Sabah added that his talks with the Tunisian foreign minister was a good opportunity to inquire about Tunisia's position on the Iraqi invasion and the resolutions of international legitimacy.

He said that Ben Yahya told him that Tunisia would welcome Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir, the first deputy prime minister and foreign affairs minister, who is due to visit Tunisia soon. [passage omitted]

Ben Ali Receives Spanish Foreign Minister

LD0401180294 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali received at Carthage Palace this morning Spanish Foreign Minister Javier Solana in the presence of [Tunisian] Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahya.

Following the meeting, which was also attended by the Tunisian and Spanish ambassadors in Madrid and Tunisia, Mr. Solana expressed his happiness for the opportunity to hold talks with his excellency the president, pointing out that the meeting dealt with relations between Tunisia and Spain, which he described as being very good.

Pro-Government Kurdish Party on Kurdistan 'Scheme'

JN0501084194 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0732 GMT 5 Jan 94

[Excerpts] Baghdad, 5 Jan (INA)—The Central Committee of the [pro-Iraq] Kurdistan Democratic Party has warned against the conspiratorial Western scheme targeting the accomplishments of the eternal 17-30 July revolution, and the gains made by the population of the Autonomous Region in northern Iraq.

This came in a final statement issued by the committee after an extraordinary meeting held to discuss the deteriorating situation experienced by our people in the Autonomous Region of Kurdistan.

The statement said: Our Kurdish people in the Autonomous Region of Iraqi Kurdistan are currently experiencing a catastrophic and miserable situation brought about by a malicious U.S.-British-Zionist scheme, the implementation of which was assigned to many parties whose common interests lie in fueling an inter-Kurdish war.

The statement added: This malicious Western scheme is meant to take revenge on great Iraq, its lofty people, and its wise leadership, particularly since the West has failed to achieve its evil objective of bringing Iraq to its knees in the 30-state aggression and successive chapters of aggression.

The statement went on to say: The parties that have exploited the tragic situation in the Autonomous Region of Kurdistan, which is living under the control of the agent cliques, harbor rancor toward the Kurdish people in particular, and Iraq in general. [passage omitted]

The statement affirmed that the Kurdistan Democratic Party is certain that our people, who have experienced hard times, as well as good times, cannot remain passive toward what is taking place in Turkey, nor can they remain silent over the ordeal our people are experiencing. For, they are bound to make a strong effort to return things to normal. The first thing they have to do, the statement noted, is to kick these agents off their land in order to bring about their humiliation and defeat, as well as the curse of both history and future generations. [passage omitted]

Kurdish Islamic Movement Told To Abide by Law

JN0501111294 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1530 GMT 4 Jan 94

[A "clarification" from the "Kurdistan Prime Ministry"—read by announcer]

[Text] Yesterday, 3 January 1994, representatives of the Kurdistan region's Presidential Council met with the delegation of the Islamic ulema in Iraq, which is comprised of Shaykh al-Nasiri, Shaykh al-Asma'iy, Shaykh Mawlan, and al-Shaykh Husayn [all names as heard]. The two sides dealt with recent developments and the restoration of normalcy.

The two sides agreed on the importance of joint cooperation to deal with problems within the framework of the laws of the region's government. In the future, the Islamic Movement must behave in accordance with the law, renounce its independent armed force, and take into consideration the Kurdistan people's interest and the preservation of their life and property.

[Signed] Nusrat Rasul 'Ali, head of the Council of Ministers; and Dr. Rawz Nuri Shawayh, deputy head of the Council of Ministers. [names and titles as heard]

[Dated] 3 January 1994.

'Responsible Source' on Debts Owed by Arab States

JN0401125994 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1040 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Baghdad, 4 Jan (INA)—Iraq has said that as of 31 December 1993, some Arab regimes owe it a total of more than $1.2 billion. These regimes had either not repaid their debts to Iraq prior to the 30-state aggression or haveseized this money along with interest.

A responsible source at the Finance Ministry told this to INA last night, pointing out that the amounts some regimes owe Iraq are broken down as follows: [figures given are in millions of dollars]

Country	Loan debts	Oil exports	Profits held at Arab firms	Iraqi banking system deposits	Total amounts due
1. Saudi Arabia:	//	402.783	20.48	17.413	422.244
2. Syria:	//	331.562	//	//	331.562
3. Bahrain:	//	//	//	239.533	239.533
4. Rulers Imposed on Kuwait:	//	22.085	21.202	80.714	124.001
5. Somalia:	65.306	//	//	//	65.306
6. United Arab Emirates:	//	//	0.517	15.767	16.284
7. Egypt:	//	//	1.481	0.365	1.846
	65.306	756.430	25.248	353.792	1,200.776

Labor Minister Returns From Visit to Sudan

JN0301200694 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] Labor and Social Affairs Minister Latif Nusayyif Jasim this evening returned to Baghdad after a visit to Khartoum. During the visit he participated in the celebrations of the 38th anniversary of sisterly Sudan's independence day.

Latif Nusayyif Jasim conveyed leader President Saddam Husayn's greetings to his brother Sudanese President Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir who received him yesterday and asked him to convey his greetings to President Saddam Husayn.

The minister also held a series of meetings with a number of Sudanese officials to discuss bilateral relations and ways to reinforce them in the service of their common interests.

Rabin: Taba Decision To Be Made in 'a Few Days'

TA0401160494 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] A decision regarding the resumption of the Taba talks will be made in a few days. Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin made this remark today, adding: Both Israel and the PLO have a vested interest in the resumption of the talks. The prime minister made the remarks during a farewell ceremony for outgoing U.S. Ambassador William Brown. Our political correspondent Udi Segal reports from the prime minister's bureau:

[Begin recording] [Segal] 'Arafat is trying to deviate from the agreement of principles, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said. We, for our part, are committed to the agreement and our stand is clear. We are exchanging comments and messages, the prime minister confirmed. The issue of the resumption of the Taba talks is being clarified, Rabin said, and will certainly be decided on within the next few days.

[Rabin] Basically, however, they are still claiming that the matters discussed in Cairo are ad referendum [last two words as heard], that is—pending approval. The scope of approval or whether there is approval at all is currently being examined. If for them it is ad referendum, for us too it is ad referendum.

[Segal] The scope of approval was expressed in several additional faxed messages received at the Foreign Ministry over the past few hours. A senior Foreign Ministry source told us that the Palestinians understand our demands, and added: We are certain that the whole matter will be settled in a few days.

Rabin also sounded optimistic. Speaking at the ceremony today, he rejected an attempt to portray the Oslo agreement as a dish that went sour:

[Rabin] I believe it did not go sour. The dish is fine. It is a declaration of principles. The implementation of each stage of it requires a separate agreement. We adhere to the Declaration of Principles and intend to implement it. I believe that the other side wants this as well. It is only natural for each side to try getting the most for itself, based on its concepts. This is what negotiations are all about. We simply need patience. We should not get excited over such or other attempts, but proceed onward.

[Segal] Rabin answered our questions at the end of a farewell ceremony for U.S. Ambassador William Brown, who ends a third, non-consecutive term in Israel. Brown spoke about Yitzhaq Rabin's courageous leadership, and in his congratulatory address he used some Hebrew terms he had learned during his long years in Israel.

[Brown, in English] The next time we meet I will be an betafqid pensyoner [acting pensioner], but I can only ask, as a favor, that you extend that warmth, hospitality, frankness, candor, and generosity to my illustrious successor Ed Djerejian as you did to me. Thank you very, very much.

[Segal, translates and continues] Rabin praised Brown warmly for his role as Uncle Sam's ambassador in Israel. [end recording]

Talks' Resumption 'Within Hours' Denied

TA0501145194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Jerusalem denies the announcement by Abu-al-'Ala' [Ahmad Quray'] in Oslo that Israel and the PLO might resume the Taba talks within hours, our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports. Abu-al-'Ala' added that no breakthrough in the contacts between the two sides has been achieved so far. Our political correspondent adds that the Taba talks will be renewed soon since the PLO has accepted the Israeli stand that the deliberations must be based on the understandings reached in Cairo last week, as well as on the declaration of principles.

Minister Yossi Sarid said in the Knesset today that while Israeli and PLO positions have drawn closer in the past two days, he can still not say that this will necessarily lead to the immediate resumption of the negotiations, but he hoped that the Taba talks would be resumed next week on the basis of the document approved by both sides in Cairo.

Minister Ya'aqov Tzur called on the government to prepare for the possibility that after the interim stage, the Palestinian autonomy will become an independent entity or an independent state. He said a security corridor, incorporating the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] camps and Jewish settlements in the Jordan Rift Valley, should be set up along the Jordan River, and it should remain under contiguous Israeli control. Minister Tzur said that insisting on those principles in the negotiations now would enable Israel to show flexibility on less substantive issues. Minister Tzur was addressing a meeting of the United Kibbutz Movement which discussed the future of the settlements in the Jordan Rift Valley.

The Ministerial Committee on National Security Affairs today discussed ways of dealing with the PLO's intention to set up extraterritorial areas in Jerusalem, such as currently exists at Orient House, which serves as PLO headquarters in East Jerusalem and comes under the control of Palestinian guards. Our political correspondent reports that security sources told the meeting that in order to prevent that happening, such moves should be defined as harming Israeli sovereignty and the relevant clauses of the Penal Code, such as the one dealing with treason, should be implemented

Likud Motion Limiting Negotiations Defeated

TA0501123494 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 5 Jan 94

[Text] In the Knesset, a move to have crucial issues concerning the peace process approved by a special majority of 90 members was defeated this morning during a stormy debate. On the line from the Knesset, David Ze'ev reports:

Both sides were mobilized, and the vote was close: 46 in favor, 52 against, and three abstentions.

The bill presented by the Likud's Me'ir Shitrit stated that an agreement with the Palestinians will be possible only if five points are ensured: no Palestinian state between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean; Jewish settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza remaining under Israeli rule, with the government responsible for their existence and security; freedom of movement of the Israeli security forces throughout the territories to stop terrorist activity; no right of return of Palestinians who left in 1948 and 1967; and Jerusalem remaining Israel's united and eternal capital. To reverse any one of these points, three quarters of the Knesset, not just a simple majority, would have to vote in favor.

Cabinet Minister Yosi Sarid, responding for the government, said the government supports certain aspects of the bill, such as on Jerusalem, but objects to Jewish settlements in the territories continuing under Israeli rule forever—certainly those settlements, said Sarid, that were built with the intention of sabotaging this government's policy of territorial compromise.

Minister Sarid, himself a participant in the recent negotiations with the Palestinians in Europe and Egypt, said he also objects to the principle of such legislation, limiting the authority of Israeli negotiations, and its acceptance, he said, would mean an end to the peace process.

Netanyahu Said To Accept Golan Compromise

TA0501124294 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 5 Jan 94 pp 1, 8

[Report by Avner Regev]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Circles close to Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu maintain that despite Netanyahu's declaration that he will not implement the Oslo agreement if he forms a government, the Likud chairman understands the agreement will be implemented in the near future. For this reason he intends to try to attain an understanding with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin—not necessary in the context of a national unity government—regarding the continuation of the process. This understanding involves a compromise on the Golan Heights while preventing the establishment of a Palestinian state as part of the permanent arrangement. The circles add that there are other senior Likud figures in addition to Netanyahu who, in exchange for such an understanding, will give their support to a peace arrangement with Syria involving withdrawal from the Golan Heights buttressed by appropriate security arrangements.

Shin Bet Unit To Aid Palestinian Collaborators

TA0501143894 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 5 Jan 94 p A1

[Report by military correspondent Eytan Rabin]

[Text] Yitzhaq Rabin, the prime minister and defense minister, in the past few weeks has approved the recommendations in a document written by the defense establishment detailing ways of aiding Palestinian collaborators for Israel, who have been living in a state of anxiety and uncertainty since the signing of the agreement with the PLO.

The document calls for the establishment of a special administrative unit within the Shin Bet for coordinating treatment of the collaborators, whose number is estimated at 2,000.

The Shin Bet will receive a special budget to aid the collaborators. A security source told HA'ARETZ that the defense establishment attributes great importance to helping those who have aided Israel over many years, sometimes at great personal risk.

After the new administrative unit is set up, the defense establishment will direct it to positively review any request by collaborators who do not want to return to their homes in the territories for fear of being tried. Many collaborators are afraid that after the implementation of Gaza and Jericho withdrawal they and their families will be harmed. It was decided to establish the special administrative unit to help them deal with this problem.

At the same time Israel's representatives to talks with the PLO were directed to make the release of Palestinian prisoners who committed grave offenses conditional on an amnesty for the collaborators.

It was made clear, however, that terrorists convicted of murder are not included among those slated to be released in exchange for such an amnesty.

Sources in the defense establishment explain there must be mutual agreement that the PLO will pardon the collaborators, or at least promise they will not be harmed, while Israel will promise to accelerate prisoner releases.

In reaction, Palestinian sources yesterday said the PLO is firmly opposed to pardoning collaborators. 'Arafat has said in the past that collaborators will be tried.

Poll: Majority Against Backing Out of Agreement

TA0501143994 Tel Aviv HATZOFE in Hebrew 5 Jan 94 p 1

[Gallup-Israel "sample" aired on a New Channel 2 Television talk show on 4 January]

[Text] Should the Israeli Government back out of the agreement of principles with 'Arafat? Some 41 percent said yes, 48 percent said no, and 11 percent had no opinion.

Mayor Dismisses U.S. Demarche on Construction

TA3112113693 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 31 Dec 93 p A6

[Report by Jerusalem correspondent Nadav Shragay]

[Text] Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert said that he was not concerned or unduly ruffled by the official demarche submitted by the United States over construction plans in the Jerusalem area. Olmert said that with all due respect to the Americans and their amazement over the scope of construction around the city, they must understand that the future of Israel's capital will not be decided by the U.S. State Department.

Olmert declared his intention to foil any possibility of Jerusalem becoming the Palestinian capital. This was one of the reasons to increase construction work around the city.

"As far as the United States is concerned, the neighborhoods of Gilo, Ramot and Pisgat Ze'ev are not part of Jerusalem, and whoever wants to get along with the Americans has to give up Gilo as well. Of course, this is totally inconceivable," Olmert said.

Olmert met with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin at the beginning of the week and presented a plan to pave "the east ring road," which was approved by the local planning board during the previous government's tenure. Olmert wants to expedite the paving of the road. One segment of the road lies outside the city's municipal jurisdiction.

According to Olmert, the road will prevent Arabs coming from the north from crossing through Jerusalem on their way to towns situated to its south.

In his meeting with Rabin, Olmert asked the prime minister to make sure that the government ministries fulfill their commitments to the Jerusalem Municipality expeditiously. Rabin acceded to the request and promised to instruct the ministers to give Jerusalem priority in their policies.

Olmert Orders East Jerusalem Trailers Removed

TA0501071894 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 5 Jan 94

[Text] There is to be no decision on the final disposition of the controversial expansion of the Bet Orot Yeshiva on the Mount of Olives until proper approval by the Jerusalem Planning Commission. This was made clear by Mayor Ehud Olmert last night, who ordered the removal of the seven mobile homes placed on land adjoining the yeshiva. The mayor says the religious seminary does not have all the necessary permits for the move. At the same time, Olmert told reporter Mark Weiss, that he still supports the construction of permanent buildings at the East Jerusalem site to house the yeshiva students and their families—a move opposed by the previous mayor, Teddy Kollek.

[Begin recording] [Olmert] I think this is a private property, belongs to a Jew. I see no problem in that particular area, which is not densely populated by Muslims and Arabs; that there can be an institution. I don't think that the east side of Jerusalem should be empty of any Jewish presence; on the contrary. And, I don't remember that anyone was protesting when the Mormons were building a big university and a big campus. It's not Muslim, it's not Arab, and yet it was built and no one protested. Only when a Jew wants to build something in that particular area, and everyone protests. And, I don't quite agree with that.

[Weiss] And how do you react to the criticism that a move at this stage in the peace process could jeopardize the talks?

[Olmert] I don't see that there should be any connection between this and the peace process. If the peace process does not apply to Jerusalem, as everyone says, why should it be applied? Jerusalem is out of the context at the present time, it's supposed to be out of the context at the present time. We talk about Jericho and about Gaza, not about Jerusalem. [end recording]

Meretz Knesset Member Avraham Poraz has called on the attorney general to annul the Jerusalem Planning Commission's decision to allow building on the Bet Orot site. Poraz charges that the decision was illegal.

Baraq Views IDF Mission Under Autonomy Plan

TA0401145394 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Chief of Staff Ehud Baraq says Israel is facing a very serious challenge in Gaza and Jericho. According to Lieutenant General Baraq, the agreement with the PLO confers three missions on the IDF [Israel Defense Forces]: To defend the external borders of the region included in the agreement, to guard the Jewish settlements, and to safeguard the travel axes.

Our correspondent Yo'el Nir reports that Lt. Gen. Baraq told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee

that the IDF understands that the government has decided to let the Palestinian police deal with the sources of terrorism. Israel assumes this will be a strong and efficient police which will cooperate with Israel in foiling terrorism and safeguarding the roads. The chief of staff made it clear that the IDF will continue to deal with terrorist acts along travel axes and in their vicinity. If the terrorists are not caught near the roads, however, the Palestinian police force will have to deal with them.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1400 GMT on 4 January, reporting on the chief of staff's Knesset appearances, adds: "Lt. Gen. Baraq told the committee that in 1993, 450 people were stricken off the wanted list—42 of them were killed, the rest either turned themselves in, were caught, or escaped abroad. The chief of staff added that 1993 was characterized by a fight against terrorism in the security zone and the rest of Lebanon, as well as by the fight against the intifadah in Judaea and Samaria. At the same time the IDF continued its buildup program on the basis of the multiyear work plan."]

Answering a question regarding the involvement of senior officers in the agreement with the PLO, the chief of staff said that senior officers on the ground and in the General Staff are not supposed to deal with the political aspects of the agreement. At the same time the Army must explain in detail all the military ramifications and present its conclusions to the government. Deputy Chief of Staff Amnon Shahaq is dealing with the technical aspects of the agreement and is trying to reach the best possible arrangements in the security sphere. The chief of staff rejected charges made by the opposition that those officers who are opposed to the agreement are being silenced. He added that there are no problems or uncertainties regarding orders relating to this issue or compliance therewith.

Our correspondent notes that at the opening of the session all members of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee congratulated the IDF since over the last year no soldiers were killed in training accidents.

Gazan Wounded by Grenade Thrown at IDF Unit

TA0501080494 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 5 Jan 94

[Text] A fragmentation grenade was thrown at an IDF [Israel Defense Forces] unit in the Erez checkpoint north of the Gaza Strip. A Gazan was slightly wounded by shrapnel, but the soldiers did not sustain any casualties. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that the IDF closed down the Erez checkpoint and is searching for the terrorist who threw the grenade.

A bus which had been hijacked by two youngsters was set ablaze this morning at the Bayt Lahiyah junction. The youngsters threatened the driver with a gun and a knife, and then let him go at the junction.

IDF Commander in Judaea, Samaria Promoted

TA3112151993 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 31 Dec 93

[Text] Brigadier General Sha'ul Mofaz, commander of IDF [Israel Defense Forces] troops in Judaea and Samaria, was today promoted to major general in a ceremony held in the chief of staff's office. Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said this rank is not just another insignia on the shoulder, but calls for additional work and responsibility and for the use of all possible qualifications in order to see the present and envision the future so as to supply answers to fast-changing problems. Maj. Gen. Mofaz is in charge of a most sensitive region, the prime minister stressed, and his job calls for a variety of qualifications, not just military ones.

Our military affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe points out that Maj. Gen. Mofaz will soon also be assigned to a senior job in the IDF's field command.

Rabin Receives Slovak Foreign Minister 3 Jan

LD0401204194 Bratislava Rozhlasova Stanica Slovensko Network in Slovak 1730 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Excerpts] Following yesterday's arrival by air in Jerusalem and initial talks with Israeli representatives, members of the Slovak delegation, headed by Foreign Minister Jozef Moravcik, continued their official visit to the Jewish state. Agata Stanekova has phoned in details from Jerusalem:

[Begin Stanekova recording] Today was not ideal for seeing the sights of the city of Jerusalem—the delegation's agenda for today. [passage omitted]

In the afternoon, Jozef Moravcik and representatives of the parliament met the chairman of the Israeli Knesset. As Ivan Laluha said, cooperation between the parliaments will begin first of all on the level of foreign affairs committees. [passage omitted]

In the Knesset building, Jozef Moravcik also met today with Israeli Prime Yitzhaq Rabin. According to Miroslav Lajcak, chief of the foreign minister's office, the talks were conducted in a businesslike atmosphere. At the beginning of the conversation, the Israeli prime minister briefed the Slovak side on the development of the Middle East talks, on Israel's economic situation, and also about the intentions to expand the country's diplomatic contacts.

Jozef Moravcik stressed yet again the significance of Slovak contacts with Israel and emphasized the actual possibilities for mutually advantageous cooperation.

Also taking part in the meeting were Economy Minister Jan Ducky who spoke about conversion of the arms industry in Slovakia and about the possibility of Israeli industry having a share in this sphere. Yitzhaq Rabin

stressed the complicated nature of the conversion process and the need to restructure Slovak industry in connection with the development of world trade.

In conclusion, Minister Moravcik conveyed to him an invitation from the Slovak prime minister.

In the evening, the members of the delegation briefly met President 'Ezer Weizman. [end recording]

Memorandum on Relations Signed

LD0501102694 Bratislava Rozhlasova Stanica Slovensko Network in Slovak 0600 GMT 5 Jan 94

[Text] Shim'on Peres and Jozef Moravcik, ministers of foreign affairs of Israel and the Slovak Republic, signed a memorandum in Jerusalem about relations between the governments of the two states. The memorandum says that, in the interest of reinforcing mutual relations, Israel and the Slovak Republic will sign, in the near future, a number of agreements on agriculture and aviation, and also agreements on the prevention of double taxation in mutual trade and on the support and protection of investments.

Followers Urge Levi To Challenge Leadership

TA3112195793 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (LESHABAT supplement) in Hebrew 24 Dec 93 pp 16, 17

[Article by Bina Barzel]

[Text] This Wednesday [22 December], Yehudit Biton ordered a bouquet of violets sent to the office of Knesset Member [MK] David Levi. "It was his birthday yesterday," Levi's executive secretary said, "I also ordered a cake for lunch as his friends will be coming to issue congratulations."

Friends indeed showed up at the Tel Aviv offices of the voluntary society for the election of David Levi, which are situated in a ground floor apartment in an old building, rented for three years and recently renovated, on Balfour Street. Rubi Rivlin, Mikha'el Kleiner [former Likud MK's], Moti Mis'ani, David 'Amar from Nesher, Gabi Lalush from Dimona, Yehuda Bros from Yavne, Ya'aqov Bardugo from the Union of Local Authorities in Israel, Aharon Abu-Hatzera [former Likud MK], Levi's sons, Shim'on and Jackie, and his brother Armond. David Levi has apparently not dropped out of the political arena, he has just purposely adopted a lower profile.

At the entrance to the apartment there are shelves with files. Yehudit has glued a picture of Levi on each file. There is a ficus plant, artificial flowers, and potted plants on the small desks. A modern print adorns the wall, and gray carpets blend nicely with the black furniture.

David Levi, 54, has organized his network of contacts and political activities from this apartment ever since the last Likud convention. This is where one can find his friends from all over Israel, every Thursday, which is "Tel Aviv Day" for most of the political system. It has recently become apparent that this apartment may also conceal a steadily ticking time bomb, aimed at Binyamin Netanyahu.

This is because Levi, despite his self-enforced temporary abstinence from power struggles inside the Likud, will soon face decisions whose implementation may threaten Netanyahu's chances to be elected prime minister. The very fact that Levi has confronted Netanyahu and refused to accept his leadership are already causing a steady erosion in the latter's standing.

Netanyahu's supporters claim that Levi's silence is no silence at all, but rather a cleverly muted struggle, which allows the members of Levi's camp to act against the Likud chairman and thus harm him.

Levi: "I want you to know I do not sit around planning. I do not deal with this."

David Levi holds his cards very close to his chest. It has always been his custom to keep his moves secret until the very last minute. Like many politicians, his assessment is that the political situation will only be clear after the results of the implementation of the Oslo agreement are known. A source close to Levi says: "the assumption is that next January will be the decisive month. It is clear that Rabin has invited the Americans to pressure him on the Syrian track."

Another assessment is that Rabin will issue a call for national unity, after implementing the first stage of the Oslo agreement, the withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho. Then the Likud will face a real problem.

Speaking off the record, people in Levi's camp reveal their uncertainties: Is it a good idea to initiate a move to hold another round of primaries to choose the Likud candidate for prime minister? Perhaps it would be better to push for a national unity government? What can Levi's camp gain out of generating internal struggles within the Likud? Is there no alternative but to eventually leave the Likud, as was once recommended by several members of Levi's camp, including his brother, Maxim? What would happen if an effort was made to garner the support of 75 percent of Central Committee members for holding repeat primaries for the movement's leadership and it failed, with Binyamin Netanyahu remaining at the head of the party? David Levi does not seem to have any clear answers to these questions.

One option he was prepared to reject categorically this week was the possibility of moving over to Labor, either with or without his group of MK's, as the late Moshe Dayan did at the time. "Says who?" Levi laughs. "Look, I am the subject of all sorts of predictions and speculation. They make me laugh. I remain loyal to my own way. There is no way I will move over to Labor."

However, some of Levi's followers are beginning to lose their patience and are pressuring him to take some action one way or another. One follower says: "There is a real feeling that the leadership is faltering, that Raful

Eytan's standing in the polls is better than that of Bibi Netanyahu. So far, Levi has been biding his time in silence, but the day is getting near when he will have to make up his mind."

Two trends can be seen in Levi's camp: Some of his men believe he should join Bibi and take second place in the leadership. If Bibi fails, Levi would naturally take his place. These men are encouraged by messages reaching Levi, whereby Bibi is prepared to give him pretty much everything short of the leadership in exchange for his cooperation. This option is apparently backed by Rubi Rivlin, Levi's brother Maxim, Aharon Abu-Hatzera, and Dudi Appel. Off the record, activists say that at this point Levi should desist from running for the premiership, seeing that this is not a realistic option at the moment.

A second option: to contest the leadership, either in internal or external primaries and, at the same time, to openly challenge the Likud chairman. Mikha'el Kleiner and Moti Mish'ani are "pushing" for such a move. Kleiner: "In the first round, Rabin would get 40 percent, and the rest would be split between Levi, Raful, and Bibi. In addition to Levi's traditional supporters, many middle-of-the-road voters appreciate Levi and would vote for him. The same applies to religious and ultra-Orthodox voters. There is a chance of Levi coming out first among the right-wing candidates in the first round and then getting the votes of the entire right-wing camp, which would close ranks behind him in the second round."

Of course, another option is to keep the present situation: to be considered the No. 2 man, but to stay outside. Given its present condition, such a stance could lead to the Likud's disintegration and force political activists to look for a new home.

A victory party was held last week in the home of David 'Amar, head of the Nesher local council and an old-time associate of Levi. Many leading members of Levi's camp are heads of local councils. These men naturally dream of being part of the list of candidates to the Knesset, and a gung ho camp could promote them politically.

Small wonder that in the jolly get-together in Nesher some people once again called on Levi to set out on a fight within the Likud, using the excuse of the political situation, the agreement with the PLO, and the Likud's stuttering response. Levi's camp must see to the well-being of the Likud and the country, they said. Levi was reluctant to become personally involved in such a move, but he did not curb the initiative to summon a Likud Central Committee session to discuss the issue.

Neither did Levi conceal his opposition to Netanyahu's proposal that the Likud formulate a political plan in response to the Oslo agreement. Without using Bibi's name, Levi said: "The political issue is the most critical to the Likud, to its performance and survival. When the government signed the agreement with the PLO, the Likud should have displayed determination, endurance, and loyalty to its own way. However, the Likud did not pass the test. There were people who talked about the need to discuss the Likud's policy and even to amend its platform."

Levi survived the trauma of moving from the government to the opposition relatively easily. His friends decided to keep the organization set up to promote his election in the Likud primaries. This organization also finances all the expenditures incurred by his activities. Its members pay "according to their ability," about $100 or more a month. Incidentally, the initiative to keep the organization alive came from Rubi Rivlin, "so that Levi need not depend on some guy with big bucks."

Two of Levi's sons, Jackie (the acting chairman of Bet She'an's local council) and Shim'on (a businessman), bought daddy a Volvo and even drive him around when his chauffeur is unavailable.

In his free time, Levi goes fishing in the canals in the Bet She'an Valley. When the mood strikes him, he redecorates his house, tearing down and building new walls.

Levi nurtures the political contacts he made when he was foreign minister. He keeps in touch with the Jewish communities in Europe, and visited them three times since the last election, twice accompanied by his wife. He does work for the drug-fighting association and large families.

Levi meticulously reports to important Knesset plenum sessions. He does not make eye contact with Bibi, but he submits numerous motions to the agenda. He is very involved in faction meetings. He can be frequently seen in the Knesset cafeteria, always surrounded by journalists.

Levi has become an important and appreciated spokesman of the right wing on foreign and security affairs, in addition to his dedication to social issues. It was only last week that he led the fight to secure jobs for hundreds of workers fired from the 'Of-Tov factory in Bet She'an.

Based on his experience in the contacts preceding the Madrid conference, he constantly cautions about the dire consequences of the government capitulating in the negotiations with the PLO, warns against euphoria and the legitimization of the PLO. He fears the way to a Palestinian state might be paved by "an autistic government, that is incapable of reading the signs of distress of the people." "There is anxiety in every household, the government is teasing the people," he stated in one of his latest appearances in the Knesset.

Nevertheless, David Levi has a real problem. If he joins Bibi and helps him win, he will be securing himself the No. 2 position in the Likud but will be giving up his dream of becoming leader of the Likud and prime minister. If he challenges the leadership once again he might hasten Netanyahu's demise, but he might also fall

together with him and pave the way for another candidate. He must also be careful not to be blamed again for the Likud's failure.

Netanyahu would today seem to be aware of Levi's power. In the first days after his impressive victory in the primaries, the message of Bibi's men was that Levi was "a dead horse." Bibi perfunctorily called on Levi to come over and work together.

However, that picture soon changed. Messages started to flow from Netanyahu's followers to Levi's camp about the need for a reconciliation between the two men. These days, when the right wing is in crisis, the two men should close ranks. A few months ago, Gush Emunim members in Netanyahu's camp tried to pull off a handshake between Netanyahu and Levi during of the demonstrations they organized after the signing of the agreement of principles. It did not work out. Bibi took the initiative and personally phoned Levi in his Bet She'an home four months ago. His wife Rashel quashed the attempt. "David is not at home," she said. When Bibi called again he got the same answer. Bibi asked that Levi phone him back, but Levi did not return his call.

In intimate meetings, Bibi's men talk about the Levi-Bibi axis as a necessary and desirable move. One of them told me they realize that similar to the Peres-Rabin match they can either rise or fall together. "Bibi will be ready to walk all the way from Jerusalem to Bet She'an to make up with Levi," one mediator told me. It seems that Bibi will also be willing to promise Levi the job of acting chairman of the Likud.

However, Levi does not seem eager to make up. He feels ill at ease with Bibi, and not just because of the videocassette affair. Their relationship soured as early as in the days when Bibi was appointed deputy minister in the Foreign Ministry, as a Shamir "plant"—at least that is how the Levi camp sees it. "A media old rag," people in Levi's camp called Bibi in those days.

Referring to reports about the proposal to appoint him deputy chairman of the Likud, Levi says: "These are rumors, and I do not know who spreads them. What purpose do they serve? Are they meant to confuse Likud members and create an atmosphere whereby there are people who propose, give, and bestow while others make demands and say no? In any event, those proposals are not made candidly."

Advocates of the Bibi-Levi axis were encouraged recently when it emerged once again that the so-called Likud princes do not consider David Levi their leader. Even if Bibi failed and Beni Begin dropped out of the race, there is another candidate: Dan Meridor.

When HA'ARETZ reported that many of Levi's men support Meridor's candidacy, these hastened to his Tel Aviv office to make clear they were not the ones. An investigation into the source of the report was conducted in the corridor outside, and suspicion fell on Ya'aqov Verdugo, spokesman of the Local Authority Center and an associate of Maxim Levi. Verdugo denied it all, of course. "David Levi is the joy and hope of my generation," Verdugo told me in response to my question about Levi's standing among Likud voters. However, the fact remains that Levi's prolonged silence, the Likud's frustration and general condition have left cracks, however thin, in Levi's camp.

When asked about his relations with Bibi Netanyahu, Levi's pronouncements are convoluted and rather vague. He will not even mention Bibi's name.

Levi: "I cut down the area of friction. There is a given situation. I do not bother anybody. I demand absolutely nothing. Let nobody say that I bother anybody. I have reached the conclusion that genuine concern for the Likud cannot only come from me. If a struggle is necessary and if there is cause for it, this should concern everybody. I am not the only one who should worry."

When his associates ask him about Bibi's performance, he refuses to comment. However, at times he may be heard reciting whole passages of snide comments made by other critics of Netanyahu. "And that is the man of whom it was said that he will bring the Likud to power," he ends with a smile.

[Barzel] You were offered, on Bibi's behalf, the No. 2 position and to be part of the leadership. If Bibi were to approach you with a consolidated proposal, would there be anything to talk about?

[Levi] Nobody is giving me anything, and I am not demanding anything. There is a given situation. I am not bothering anybody and I am not expecting any proposals.

[Barzel] Let us talk about your occupations outside the Likud. How many hours a week do you go fishing?

[Levi] Fishing is not measured in hours. I have been a fishing buff since childhood. I feel extraordinarily calm when I am in contact with nature. It feels like yoga.

[Barzel] Do you have fishing rods and other equipment?

[Levi] Sure. I bring the fish, gray mullet and trout, to Rashel and she cooks them in a special way with red peppers and lots of garlic and parsley. These are my favorite fish. They are fresh and I caught them. Even when I am abroad, I eat mainly fish and fruit, both because of kosher rules and because I love fish.

[Barzel] What's your wife's name, Rahel or Rashel?

[Levi] I call her Rashel. That was her name when I met her, when we immigrated to Israel. It was the eve of Passover. She came from Casablanca with a family of 12 children, and I came from Rabat with my family of eight. We traveled by taxi, with forged passports. When we reached the Strait of Gibraltar I saw Rashel lifting some suitcases and I ran to help her. Later she befriended my sister and my late mother. This relationship continued in the immigrant camp in Marseilles.

Then the time came to immigrate to Israel, and our family's turn came before hers. We separated, hoping to meet again in Israel. We were sent to Bet She'an, and a few months later she arrived here with her family. They wanted to live in Jerusalem, but they were told that Bet She'an was close enough. I had gone to send her a letter, to the camp in Marseilles. On my way back home to our cabin I noticed a big commotion outside. I found her and her family embracing my mother and sisters. It was the biggest surprise of my life.

[Barzel] Do you consult her or your family?

[Levi] Our family grew with political awareness. If there is a certain situation, the whole house gets involved and we talk about it on Saturday. My children, including the married ones, did not leave Bet She'an. One of my daughters married a man whose family lives in France, but I trust that she will soon bring her husband to Israel. Another daughter lives "far away," in Tiberias. All my children and grandchildren come on Saturday to the warm nest we have built.

I do not only love fishing, but also building. Every year or two I pull down a wall and start building. It drives Rashel crazy. "Here we go again with the mess. I do not know how am I going to deal with it," she says. But, all my sons and daughters help out. Small renovation work I do alone, either at night or on Fridays. Recently I pulled down a few walls in order to enlarge the dining room, and thank God, now I have a big and beautiful house.

I am happy that my sons and daughters stayed in Bet She'an, that they decided the way they did. They remained faithful to something I appreciate, togetherness. They pay a price for it though. Shim'on, for example, gave up an important security job which would have meant moving away. But, there are rewards. Everybody here has known him from the day he was born. In our town, people who make it do not leave. I did the same when I was foreign minister. I used the official apartment in Jerusalem only one Saturday. Every Friday afternoon we rushed back to Bet She'an to get ready for the Sabbath.

[Barzel] And how will you get to Bet She'an when an autonomy is established in Jericho?

[Levi] I will drive through Jericho. What is happening will not block my way to Jerusalem. I think that losing the road from the Jordan Valley to Jerusalem would be tantamount to losing the natural connection between the entire north of Israel and Jerusalem, and that is why this will not come to happen. My feeling is that the road to Jerusalem will not be blocked.

[Barzel] When you were foreign minister you met heads of state. When you were construction minister you built in Judaea, Samaria, Gaza, and Jerusalem. Is it not hard for you now, without all this activity?

[Levi] There is a proverb in Arabic which says: "When times get tough, a man who worked all his life will smell his hands and feel satisfied." I did something for this country. Wherever I go people remember my dedication. Unfortunately, within my own party people are trying to minimize and blur my contribution. But friends remember. Wherever I visit, people call me "Mr. Minister." I say to them: "Ex-minister." But they insist: "You will always be a minister to us." That is nice, never mind the belief that politics is ruthless. Only people who have not been put to a test can be predators, without any regard for rules, friendship, or loyalty.

King Speaks About Relations With Palestinians

JN0401193094 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1630 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Speech by King Husayn at a meeting with senior Public Security, General Intelligence, and Civil Defense officers in Amman on 4 January—recorded]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] A few days ago, as you know, I met with your brothers in the Armed Forces. I covered several important topics that I felt is my duty to explain to the brothers, the comrades in arms, and the soldiers of the Arabs. [passage omitted]

This country is the heart of the greater Arab homeland. This country is the homeland of the emigrants [Meccans who emigrated to Medina in the early period of Islam] and the followers [Medinan followers of Prophet Muhammad who granted him refuge]. God willing, this country will remain the example to be followed in terms of patience, forbearance, and clear vision for all its sons at all stages. We all safeguard national unity with our souls, our minds, and our logic, and with an eagerness to give a good and unique example to the generations to come of the big meeting that unites the one march. I have said on more than one occasion, and I mean what I say, that any party which seeks to harm national unity in this country—any individual who seeks to do this—will be my foe until the end. [passage omitted]

In the past, and over the past few days, I spoke more than enough about the atmosphere in which we live and the difficult circumstances we experience. I spoke about the peace process to which we are committed, about a comprehensive and just peace, and the peace that will give the generations to come an opportunity to live a free, dignified life in a secure and stable atmosphere and that will unleash their potential creativity. It is a peace we will not fear if we are armed with awareness, determination, and resolve and, as is the case, if we are the sons of a rich experience.

I also spoke about this decisive stage with respect to the need to put emphasis on Arab action and coordination, starting with Jordanian-Palestinian coordination. I spoke out of my concern for the kinsfolk and the brothers in the occupied territories. We have lived and experienced with them difficult and harsh circumstances along their path of steadfastness on their land and their resolve to cling to it. This stage requires the Palestinian command to choose and to clearly define the features of its march. We firmly believe that this leadership will reflect what is in the hearts and minds of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories and elsewhere, and that it is rising to the level that will enable it to carry out its duty and great role in serving the people on the road to the attainment of their aspirations and hopes concerning their full rights on their national soil.

Naturally, this could happen through the scenario we hope for, and in a way where this leadership represents this people and continues to serve them in the occupied territories, and in a way where this leadership reassures the kinsfolk and brothers that it has reached both the stage and level at which it is both for and from all Palestinians.

Regarding the relationship with us, we are proceeding on a path that our fathers and grandfathers followed. We broke bread together. I am talking here about this one people and this one large family, not only in Jordan but in both Palestine and Jordan. We have suffered and continue to suffer together.

In this phase, we must reach a situation whose features are clear, so we can know what is ours and they can know what is theirs, and all of us can know what is incumbent upon us. In my opinion, what is being proposed is: Either they seek our backing—and we are ready to offer it, just as we have always done from the very beginning—or the other alternative, which I need not discuss.

As for us here in Jordan, when things go well, God willing, only then will the choice be presented for those who wish to stay with us or to choose another road. One can then make up their mind, and their choice will be respected. Until then, national unity, democracy, and human rights here should be preserved. This will not be for a limited period, but will be the beginning of a serious march with an ongoing objective, God willing.

This country, God willing, is a symbol and a model for the brothers in the Arab homeland, in the Islamic world, and everywhere.

We spoke about Jerusalem. Jerusalem is in the hearts and the minds of all of us, and it will continue to be that way. I presented my remarks and ideas on the situation and the seriousness of this stage, and I voiced my concern that our relations with our sacred shrines—and the shrines in Jerusalem in general—or the responsibilities for them, may be affected in one way or another as a result of some development or circumstances. In order to avoid a new vacuum, as was the case after 1974, concerning Jerusalem and the shrines, we explained our view and suggestion. We are continuing our duty as best we can toward Jerusalem, which is in our hearts and the minds. We will never forget Jerusalem for one moment.

We talked about what has been proposed with regard to confederation and related issues. As I asked the Palestinian leadership to drop this word from its lexicon, I will drop it from my lexicon also, as of this meeting, not because I do not believe that this people is one people, but because I believe that this people, here and there, are the owners of the decision. The decision with regard to the form of the future relationship is not imposed by any party or any group of people—neither in the Palestinian arena nor here. After the return of the land to its people and owners, the decision on this issue will be made in the future in an atmosphere of democracy, freedom, respect for human rights, and participation in decisionmaking. God willing, the meeting [al-liqa'] will take place in one way or another on solid and firm ground with absolute confidence and accurate knowledge that this Jordan has

always been for Palestine and that Jordan has never had any ambitions toward it. It has always assumed its duties as King Husayn I and King 'Abdallah Bin-al-Husayn assumed their duties. We have been performing this duty until today.

Then, any formula that comes up will be the accepted and agreed upon formula through convergence of opinion—whether the choice was made here or there. Therefore, all these will become guarantees to safeguard the march from what it will face in the future.

Our talk in the past about this issue aimed at enabling our brothers to reach what they have reached and to shoulder the responsibilities they accepted in order to represent the Palestinian Arab people in terms of their rights. We were, we are, and we will continue to be committed to our stand with regard to the Rabat summit resolution—regardless of any other consideration—because our kinsfolk and brothers, the owners of this right, opted for this road. We supported them and we will continue to support with all our potential.

We hope that it was a method that helped them reach the situation in which they represent themselves in the world. We ask God to help them maintain their credibility toward all their commitments. I am not speaking in general terms here, I am talking in particular about what concerns us here in Jordan. In other words, I hope that within a short period of time we will reach a clear, common view regarding all important issues. We will adhere to our pledges. We have always kept our pledges. However, if things remain as they were, particularly since we endured a great deal, this will be a risky thing not only with regard to Palestine, the cause and rights on Palestinian soil, but also with regard to Jordan.

I have a great hope that during this period—I said Tuesday, it seems now that it might be Wednesday or Thursday...[pauses] Without sincerity and cooperation to serve people and the cause, I do not believe we can proceed and wait forever. We are very concerned about assuming our duty and role. We hope that we will be in a position in which we can achieve this. We are aware of the burdens and responsibilities shouldered by this Palestinian leadership in this delicate stage. However, these are responsibilities that it opted to shoulder. With God's help, it will reach the level in which we can support it in all details and matters that must be tackled by all of us.

We hope that it is seen in the world as a responsible party that represents all those it is shouldering the responsibility of representing. We hope that it will be flanked with the great human resources that are available in the arena and will be credible so that it will be able to move ahead, God willing, and so that all these initial developments will be the beginning of reaching the aspired objectives, with God's help.

I spoke about coordination with our brothers, and this is something that is taking place with our brothers in Syria, Lebanon, and Egypt. Again, if the Arab trend has been toward a comprehensive solution, then we have kept our commitment to work for a comprehensive solution.

If some thought that this country, for one reason or another, and due to the burden and responsibilities it is bearing, might choose a different path, such expectations have not been realized, praise be to God.

A sisterly Arab country had concluded a peace treaty with Israel. We all agreed on the same objective when we agreed to go to Madrid. The Palestinian brothers—of whom we are part, whom we supported, and for whom we shouldered the responsibility until 1974—chose to shoulder the responsibility. This decision received an all-out Arab blessing. We were committed to a similar position toward them, and we will continue to be so. They have chosen to go with us, even formally in a certain stage when the umbrella was there, before we threw it in the wastebasket of history, and before they directly shouldered their responsibilities.

Now, we are continuing our search and efforts, and everyone knows that since 1974 we have followed a clear path. We have been committed to a firm position. Neither before 1974, nor since the adoption of the Security Council Resolution 242—which the PLO accepted alongside Resolution 338 as the basis of what is going on now, nor after the disengagement of administrative and legal links with the West Bank, did we ever bargain for one moment on a grain of the Palestinian soil or any of the Palestinian rights on Palestinian soil. Our position has been the same since 1974, and we have been supporting the PLO position from 1974 until now.

A greeting to all the sons of the homeland, under all circumstances, at this critical stage. A greeting of pride and appreciation. At the same time, we take pride in those who shouldered their serious and sensitive responsibilities under these circumstance by representing Jordan in the peace talks from the beginning when a national decision was made to go to Madrid. In every circumstance they were brave men who did not fear meeting with others, working for the sake of our interests, and preserving the right to live for the people and the whole nation.

We hope that matters will move toward a comprehensive solution with the participation of all sides, stage after stage, and in light of the fact that we all have proceeded from the same point. I have previously mentioned, and I reiterate it now, that despite all pressures, we in this country are not prepared to sign a peace treaty unless we deal with all issues and matters in a satisfactory and balanced way acceptable to us and to the other party. When all these issues are dealt with, peace will follow in the final analysis or be the beginning for a new stage in which every one lives in security and stability and in which doors are opened wide, God willing, to progress and development for people to live in circumstances from which we were deprived from the beginning. We concentrate on land, water, human rights, and all the

topics included in the agenda that we have endorsed in support of progress on the Palestinian-Israeli track.

As you all know, we stayed behind, waiting for something. A surprise followed, and we decided to approve the agenda pertaining to the issues between Jordan and Israel. We also described the Palestinian step as courageous, and we hoped the leadership would rise to the required level. We hope that the Palestinian arena will be one in which all people meet with clear vision and unity in this critical situation. At the end of this meeting, I repeat my thanks to and appreciation for all the brothers, and I hope you will convey my heartfelt greetings to all the brothers who share your responsibilities in your various fields, as well as our love for and pride in you. We are part of this great march, which will achieve, with God's help, all its goals. God bless you, and God's peace be upon you. [applause]

King Urges PLO Leadership To Define 'March'

JN0401170894 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn has expressed pride in the distinguished performance of the members of the Armed Forces, Public Security forces, General Intelligence Directorate, and Civil Defense forces based on their awareness, honesty, sacrifices, and strength to safeguard this homeland's security and stability. His majesty the king greeted all the sons of the homeland, whatever their circumstances, in this delicate stage. He reiterated his pride in all those who shouldered their serious and delicate responsibilities to represent Jordan in the peace talks following the national decision to move toward Madrid in order to work for the interest of the country and to preserve the right of the people and the whole nation to life. The king made these remarks during his meeting at the Royal Hashemite Court today with the senior officers in the public security, general intelligence, and civil defense fields.

The king reaffirmed Jordan's commitment to move toward a just and comprehensive peace that will provide the next generations with a free and honest life.

His majesty touched on Arab coordination, beginning with Jordanian-Palestinian coordination. He noted that the talk in this regard stems from our concern about the kinsfolk and brothers in the occupied territory with whom we have lived through difficult and tough circumstances by steadfastness and adherence to their land.

King Husayn said: These circumstances require the Palestinian leadership to choose and clearly define the features of its march, asking God that it reflects what we firmly believe is found in the conscience and heart of the Palestinian people in the occupied territory and elsewhere and that it shoulders the responsibility that will enable it assume its duty and major role to serve the Palestinian people on the path of achieving their aspirations and hopes.

King Husayn: With regard to the relationship with us, we are walking on the road followed by our fathers and grandfathers. We shared our daily bread as one community in Palestine and Jordan.

His majesty said: Our democratic march is an expression of our belief that everybody should participate in decisionmaking and laying down the features of the future through awareness, determination, honesty, sincerity, and cooperation between the three branches of power and the people who are our strength, the reason of our existence, and the objective of our determination.

King Husayn called for preserving national unity and safeguarding it through belief, reason, and logic. He also called for a unique example to be given for the coming generations.

Crossings Planned in 'Absence' of PLO Coordination

JN3112171393 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 29 Dec 93 pp 1, 4

[By Salamah Ni'mat in Amman]

[Excerpt] Official Jordanian sources yesterday said that in case a Jordanian-Israeli agreement is reached in the absence of coordination between Jordan and the PLO, the Jordanian Government would resort to establishing crossing points between the East and West Bank other than the known traditional crossings.

The sources told AL-HAYAH that the government would reuse the Damiya Bridge which links Jordan with the Nabulus region, which is not part of the limited autonomous self-rule in Gaza and Jericho, or would establish a crossing point in the city of al-'Aqabah on the Red Sea "to facilitate the passage of Palestinian and Jordanian citizens and to link between the two wings of the Arab world in North Africa and Asia."

It is known that travelers between the East and West Bank currently use the King Husayn (Allenby) Bridge and the Prince Muhammad Bridge over the River Jordan in the Jordan Valley. It is clear that any such Jordanian measure will render useless any Palestinian-Israeli agreement on crossings from and to the Jericho region.

The Jordanian sources stressed that any such step "will facilitate traffic between the two banks, especially since most West Bank Palestinians hold Jordanian passports." One of the sources criticized Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat due to "his disinclination to coordinate with Jordan" on the issue of crossings, "without taking into consideration that any arrangements on any side of the border must take place through coordination with the other side."

The source stressed that Jordan "desires to ease the immense pressure" on the Palestinian citizens in the occupied territories "as much as it can." [passage omitted]

Minister Urges PLO To Understand, Coordinate

JN0401175094 London AL-WASAT in Arabic 3-9 Jan 94 p 4

[By Faysal al-Shubul]

[Text] Amman—Information Minister Dr. Jawad al-'Anani has stated that if the PLO wants Jordan to understand the pressures being put on the PLO leadership, it should try to understand the pressures being put on Jordan. In a statement to AL-WASAT, he said: "No one party should ask the other to be more understanding because we are in the same boat and are facing the same circumstances and difficulties."

Al-'Anani added: "We believe there must be coordination with our Palestinian brothers prior to any agreement with the Israelis, but the brothers in the PLO seem to have another concept. Each side has its own identity and aspirations that do not conflict with one another. We should not allow pressures to have a negative effect on our relations. Coordination is necessary at this stage and is required for sound negotiations. Commonality of interests and the requirements of successful negotiations make us demand coordination which, we believe, has no alternative." He added: "All this does not mean estrangement. Jordan believes that postponement of coordination will not serve any side."

Al-'Anani revealed that Jordan and the PLO have reached many agreements on trade, investment, citizens' travel, free zones, transit, movement in the Arab region, security, borders, and water. These agreements have not been signed.

Asked about opening branches for Jordanian banks in the occupied West Bank, the Jordanian information minister said that this step would not have been discussed with the Israeli side if it had not already been discussed with the Palestinian side. It was one of the agreements we reached with the PLO. He denounced reports that Jordan decided to exploit the current opportunity to reopen the banks.

Replying to another question, the information minister said that the issue of establishing a Palestinian monetary authority still seems to be a possibility. Our negotiations with the Palestinians do not conflict with that possibility, and, if realized, we will hold further negotiations.

It is noteworthy that Dr. Jawad al-'Anani was one of the prominent members of the Jordanian negotiating delegation. He is also a well-known economist and held the position of trade and industry minister in 1984 and 1985.

It is also worth mentioning that Jordanian officials feel that the PLO wants to put off the signing of the economic agreement with Jordan until the PLO's leadership returns to Jericho.

Official on Egyptian, Palestinian Coordination

NC0501091694 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 5 Jan 94

[Telephone interview with Talal al-Hasan, minister of state for foreign affairs, in Amman, by Fawzi al-Jundi in Cairo, on the "Dialogue From Afar" program; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Al-Jundi] Your Excellency, let us begin this interview with the outcome of the visit to Amman by Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and the importance of coordinating stands, particularly the Jordanian-Palestinian stand, now as well as in coming days.

[Al-Hasan] You know that Jordanian-Egyptian coordination is constant. His Majesty King Husayn and his brother President Husni Mubarak have always been very careful to maintain that coordination with a view to serving bilateral ties and, accordingly, the peace process and the common stands that constitute the proper framework for strengthening the all-Arab stand to serve the higher common interests of all Arabs. His Majesty King Husayn received Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa in Amman. They held an extensive discussion in a cordial and fraternal climate on ways to enhance bilateral ties. They also reviewed the peace process' progress along the various tracks. They agreed to continue coordination to achieve the desired results.

[Al-Jundi] Since we are talking about coordination, a meeting is currently being held between the Palestinian and Jordanian brothers in the Jordanian capital, Amman, to coordinate stands between Jordan and the PLO and to prepare an economic agreement between the Palestinian and Jordanian sides. Will you shed light on the importance of developing the Palestinian-Jordanian dialogue?

[Al-Hasan] You know that Jordan has always called for such comprehensive coordination. We have always called for supporting every effort that would strengthen the position of the Arab negotiators and enhance coordination at the bilateral and collective levels. We were keen to offer every assistance to the Palestinians to support their position during the peace process and on other issues. We started coordinating with the Palestinian brothers long before the peace process. Now, on the eve of the coordination meetings, we hope that a climate of clarity and frankness will prevail during the meetings. We hope these meetings produce the desired results that will truly support the Palestinian brothers and, accordingly, the collective Arab stand.

[Al-Jundi] King Husayn has warned President 'Arafat not to talk about a confederation between Jordan and the Palestinians. Is there a specific Jordanian stand on the issue of confederation?

[Al-Hasan] His Majesty King Husayn was very clear in the second speech he made a few days ago about the issue of confederation and other issues. We have explained Jordan's stand on confederation on several occasions. This issue is not under consideration at present, hence it cannot be discussed; it should be left until the brother Palestinians obtain and exercise self-determination and express their views freely. We are leaving this matter up to the Jordanian and Palestinian peoples. The issue of confederation is not under discussion right now. What we are doing at present is coordinating stands during the peace process and negotiations so that our stands can be clarified and our collective interests served.

[Al-Jundi] King Husayn will visit the U.S. capital, Washington, in the next few days. What can we say about Jordan's expectations of a direct and clear U.S. role in pushing the Middle East peace march ahead, particularly along the Jordanian-Israeli track?

[Al-Hasan] As far as the role of the U.S. sponsor in the Middle East peace process is concerned, it is clear that the U.S. is determined to give the peace process all the support and impetus it needs. This was emphasized by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher during his recent visit to Amman and the region. He affirmed that the Arab-Israeli conflict has top priority in U.S. foreign policy. Hence, we trust that the U.S. Administration will perform its role as a full partner and honest mediator in the peace process. This will give the process the impetus it needs and will serve as one of the main instruments for progress on the various Arab tracks.

PLO Economic Accord Dispute Concerns Timing

JN0301110694 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 3 Jan 94 p 25

[Text] London, QNA—Dr. Jawad al-'Anani, minister of information and minister of state for Cabinet Affairs, has stated that the differences on the Jordanian-Palestinian economic agreement revolve around the date of its implementation.

In an interview with Radio London yesterday, al-'Anani explained that the Palestinian side believes that the economic agreement should be implemented following an agreement on Gaza and Jericho while the Jordanian side believes it should precede any Palestinian-Israeli agreement.

Dr. al-'Anani said that Jordan has had economic relations with the West Bank and Gaza since 1967 and that this relationship needs to be organized under the canopy of the new framework. That is why there is no reason to postpone such a reorganization until after the conclusion of the Gaza-Jericho negotiations.

Dr. al-'Anani denied that the disagreement between the two sides stems from the fact that the Palestinians want to have a central bank of their own that will supervise the banks that open in the West Bank. Al-'Anani said that the agreement stipulates that banking arrangements included in the agreement will remain in force until the end of the transitional period, or the establishment of a central Palestinian monetary institution, whichever takes place first.

Dr. al-'Anani emphasized that the PLO should coordinate with Israel before coordinating with Jordan because any agreement reached between Israel and the PLO directly affects Jordan. [sentence as published]

Dr. al-'Anani said that the conclusion of an agreement between the PLO and Jordan will have a positive impact on the process of negotiations as this will reassure people that Jordanian-Palestinian relations will be organized and clearly defined relations based on sound foundations. Al-'Anani affirmed that Jordanian-Palestinian coordination is very important, and that is why they should not be exposed to the political ups and downs that accompany the negotiations.

The Jordanian-Palestinian agreement that was finalized two months ago stipulates the reopening of the Jordanian banks that were operational in the occupied territories in 1967. The agreement also tackles trade between the two sides and attempts to invigorate them, and covers investments, infrastructure contracts, free zones, and transit operations.

Lower House Resumes Debate of Peace Talks

JN0201212994 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 2000 GMT 2 Jan 94

[Text] The Lower House of Parliament resumed its debate of the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations behind a closed door. Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali made a statement last Wednesday [29 December] at the start of the debate on developments in the negotiations. His statement followed a vote in favor of a closed door meeting.

Several representatives today demanded that their meeting should be held open and they argued the government had made its statement and that many things became clear after yesterday's speech by his majesty the king.

After a discussion of the move the house speaker decided that the debate should again proceed behind closed doors.

Editorials Stress Need for PLO Coordination

'Right' To Ask PLO To Coordinate Seen

JN0201134794 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 1 Jan 94 pp 1, 22

[Editorial: "Frankness Is a Must"]

[Text] King Husayn spoke with utmost frankness to his brave soldiers. He briefed them, along with the sons of this homeland, on the great pressures and responsibilities that Jordan has borne and is still bearing. No other country could have remained steadfast while facing these

pressures and responsibilities and at the same maintained its principles and its security, and continued carrying its message.

With the right words, his majesty reviewed the pan-Arab and courageous role Jordan had played in rescuing the major part of Palestine, and the position it adopted in 1967, without which Israel would have occupied both banks [of the Jordan River].

Twenty years ago, Jordan tried to warn of the vacuum that would result from viewing the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, not for ambitions or intentions it was harboring, but to give the country from which the land was snatched the opportunity to regain it before giving it back to its owners. But the Rabat summit decision was adopted at that time, and the vacuum of which Jordan had warned occurred.

When Jordan decided to disengage links with the West Bank, it sought to cede the land to the Palestinians and not the Israelis. However, developments and recent agreements did not fully lead in this direction. A new situation surfaced with which Jordan tried to deal with the highest possible self-restraint, and declared that it accepts what the Palestinian leadership accepts.

Nevertheless, the brothers in the Palestinian leadership began to keep away from coordination, which aims in the first place to safeguard their authority on their soil and to realize the hoped-for objectives of ending the occupation and attaining independence and sovereignty.

Since the signing of the PLO-Israeli agreement, Jordan has been aiming to reach an understanding with the future authority in the West Bank and Gaza and not with the authority that is occupying them. Jordan has been hoping that its eagerness to maintain the Arab nature of the West Bank, Gaza, and Jerusalem in particular would be met with eagerness by the brothers in the Palestinian leadership to expedite bolstering future Jordanian-Palestinian relations on sound political and economic bases that reflect the cohesion between the two fraternal peoples—cohesion that no one can end or shatter.

Therefore, Jordan has the right, amid the successive developments in the region, to ask the brothers in Palestinian leadership to expedite reaching an understanding and to coordinate with Jordan in order to establish sound and healthy relations that will be in the interest of the two peoples, and in order to prevent the occupier from benefiting from any confusion that may strike these relations.

Coordination 'Necessity' Not 'Luxury'

JN0301091994 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 3 Jan 94 p 4

[Editorial: "Finally, Some Response"]

[Text] PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat has every right to demand and work for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip; and, we think, his people will eventually get what they want. But he must have realised by now that for the Israelis to agree to such an eventuality, and for the world community to bless it, the PLO leader needs to play his cards right, wait for a while and give priority to building Palestinian institutions that would be mature and healthy enough to deliver such a state.

In undertaking this major task, Mr. 'Arafat cannot afford to alienate everybody he knows. There are a few toes around, anyway, that he can step on. On the other hand, he has every reason to cultivate the support of especially those who are most ready and willing to help him achieve full rights. Jordan is on top of the list of those countries which not only back the PLO-Israel agreement, but whose national security also depends on the success of the accord. True, Jordan is not yet ready to discuss a confederation with Chairman 'Arafat, simply because such a link can take place only between sovereign states, but there is no question that the Kingdom is fully committed to helping our Palestinian brethren in their quest for realising their legitimate rights, including self-determination and statehood.

Jordan, however, has its own interests, which, incidentally or otherwise, in no way clash with Palestinian aspirations fo independence. Furthermore, what the leadership of this country has been asking of the PLO leader is no more than what Mr. 'Arafat himself has been demanding of other Arabs, namely coordination and cooperation on vital issues.

It was the Palestinians who insisted right from the beginning of the Madrid talks in the fall of 1991 on full coordination among the Arab parties to the peace process: Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the Palestinians. As a result of its secret agreement with Israel the PLO managed to alienate Syria and, by extension, Lebanon. Jordan, as the PLO is fully aware, has not taken such a position. To the contrary, it has forgiven Mr. 'Arafat for reaching a separate deal with Israel, and His Majesty the King went as far as congratulating the PLO leader on his courage in reaching the Oslo accords.

But while Mr. 'Arafat might understandably be occupied with everything under the sun, he must remember that the mind of the Jordanian leadership is set on guarding the real interests of an Arab state, whose wellbeing is of vital interest to the cause of Palestine. Whatever agreement the Palestinians reach or fail to reach with the Israelis is going to have its consequences on Jordan. Therefore, coordination among the two parties is not a luxury, it is a necessity. The Palestinian leadership certainly realises that it has a stake in a strong Jordan both during the transitional period and afterwards. And that is why the arrival here this week of a delegation to start real coordination should be such a welcome change.

Efforts To Coordinate Assessed

JN0501114794 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 5 Jan 94 pp 1, 21

[Editorial: "Putting Matters In Their Context"]

[Text] Perhaps the regrettable matters which we found ourselves having to stand around and talk about are matters which concern the disappointment that has followed every stage in our efforts toward an honest, real, and clear coordination with our brothers in the PLO. Despite all our steps on the ground that proceeded from the uniqueness of Jordanian-Palestinian relations and despite everything we took into consideration before taking any step toward maintaining this uniqueness, we found ourselves still facing suspicion, doubts, and questioning. Moreover, despite our concern not to waste time by refuting false accusations and our concern to work instead of getting angry, blaming, or turning our backs, our efforts continued to be futile and our stands continued to be the last to be trusted and treated clearly by some PLO leaders. The result was always a loss for us as a nation, a loss for us as one family, and a loss for us as the owners of a just cause in which the only requirement to achieve our rights is a sincere and faithful joint action that is far from any form of prevarication.

Today, as Amman witnesses another Jordanian attempt to compensate for the past, correct matters, and place Jordanian-Palestinian coordination before any useless step taken with the enemy, we reaffirm the importance of proceeding from trust and from a feeling, as we sit at one table, that the cause is that of a generation that has suffered a lot and that of generations which we cannot allow to inherit disappointment. We also reaffirm that national and pan-Arab concern over our rights requires us to feel that we are sitting together as brothers and not as those lying in wait for each other. Indeed, it is ridiculous to believe that the Israeli is closer to the Palestinian than the Jordanian is to the Palestinian. It is also ridiculous to believe that the Jordanians can trust the Israeli side while there are continued doubts and suspicions between the Jordanians and the Palestinians. No one can tear apart the unity of or create a substitute for this one family that has been united by four decades of pain, hopes, steadfastness, perseverance, and many dreams. Those who do not fear God in what they think, do, seek, or imagine achieving, or think it is possible to side with the enemy at the expense of the brother will only reap disappointment and loss. Moreover, they will discover too late that it is hard to continue deceiving others by deceiving themselves. This tragedy has not just begun. What we are witnessing now is the natural result of all those years of such an attitude.

Report on Ban of Gaza Produce Via Jordan Denied

JN0501103094 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 5 Jan 94 p 3

[By a JORDAN TIMES staff reporter]

[Text] Amman—Senior officials Wednesday [5 January] dismissed as baseless an Israel Radio report that Jordan has banned the flow of agricultural produce from the Gaza Strip through the Kingdom.

"The report is totally baseless and unfounded," said Wahib Husayn, head of the agriculture section of the Department of Palestinian Affairs.

The flow of Palestinian agricultural produce through Jordan for exports continues unimpeded and "no such ban reported by the Israeli media has been adopted by Jordan," Mr. Husayn told the JORDAN TIMES.

Mr. Husayn as well as other officials described the report as Israeli propaganda aimed at creating trouble between Jordan and the Palestinians.

According to the Israeli report, the purported ban was imposed because Jordan was upset with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) for its lack of political coordination with the Kingdom.

Officials laughed off the report.

"It is another link in the chain of the Israeli-orchestrated campaign to poison the atmosphere between Jordan and the PLO and the Palestinians in the occupied territories," said a senior official, who preferred anonymity.

"There is a political decision to support the Palestinians living in the occupied territories to the best of Jordan's abilities, and there is no logic in suggesting that we are adopting moves contrary to that decision," added the official.

Ministry of Agriculture officials said routine permissions had already been issued, allowing fruits and vegetables from the Gaza Strip to enter Jordan in transit for export purposes between Jan. 1 and April 30, 1994, and that West Bank produce could enter Jordan without restraints except those in place to protect local produce.

As a rule, West Bank produce is allowed into Jordan for exports as well as to make up for the shortfalls in local production depending on season, the officials said.

There have been a few occasions when Jordan had no choice but to block the entry of certain products because Israelis tried to "sneak in" their products disguised as Palestinian products, the officials said, noting that allowing such items to enter Jordan would be in violation of the Arab boycott of Israel.

Jordan imports around $30 million worth of Palestinian products every year, including fruits and vegetables, meat products and olive oil as well as building stones, and does not impose any customs on them, considering the imports as internal trade.

Nearly 12,000 tonnes of fruits and vegetables from the West Bank and nearly 3,000 tonnes from the Gaza Strip entered Jordan during 1993, according to official figures. The bulk of the produce was destined for the Gulf states.

Israel does not allow the export of Jordanian products to the occupied territories.

Trade between Jordan and the occupied territories has been an issue under discussion at varying forums and stages among three main parties involved—Jordan, the Palestinians and Israel—in the 26- month-old Middle East peace process.

But to definite agreement has been reached since Israel has been trying to maintain the occupied territories as a protected market for its own products while seeking to impose ceilings, tariffs and levies on non-Israeli products, officials say.

House Speaker Receives Kuwaiti Charge 3 Jan

JN0401110594 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 0925 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Amman, 4 Jan (PETRA)—Tahir al-Masri, speaker of the House of Representatives, received in his office yesterday morning the Kuwaiti charge d'affaires in Amman.

During the meeting, discussions dealt with general and bilateral issues.

'Moderates' Win Most Seats on IAF Council

JN0101101794 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 1 Jan 94 p 10

["Special to the JORDAN TIMES" by Sa'idah al-Kilani]

[Text] Amman—The Islamic Action Front (IAF) party Friday [31 December] elected a 16-member executive council in an unexpected tranquil atmosphere. The results showed the victory of 10 new aspirants while six incumbents retained their seats. Ishaq al-Farhan was reelected president of the executive council while 'Abd-al-Majid al-Dhunaybat was reelected as president of the Majlis al-Shura by acclamation.

The Majlis al-Shura then elected 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Shuraydah as its vice-president and 'Abd-al-'Aziz Jabir and Khalid al-Qudat as the president's assistants.

Only 106 out of 120 Majlis al-Shura members proceeded afterwards to the election of the 16 executive council members out of 25 candidates; eight members cast empty ballots. Leading members Hammam Sa'id and Muhammad Abu-Faris refused to nominate themselves to the council despite suggestions by many.

The results showed that moderates won most of the seats on the party's executive council.

The IAF is the political branch of the Muslim Brotherhood and while Brotherhood membership is not a prerequisite for IAF membership, most IAF members are Brotherhood members as well.

A majority of IAF members, estimated by the party at between 3,000 and 5,000, supports the moderates.

The new executive council and number of votes they obtained are as follows: 'Abd-al-Latif 'Arabiyat (78 votes), Hamzah Mansur (76 votes), 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Qudat (73 votes), Bassam al-'Umush (72 votes), 'Adnan al-Jaljuli (70 votes), Ahmad Tanash (69 votes), Ahmad al-Kafawin (69 votes), 'Abdallah al-'Akayilah (68 votes), Na'il al-Masalihah (68 voters), Muhammad 'Uwaydah (61 votes), Jamil Abu-Bakir (60 votes), Ibrahim al-Kilani (57 votes), Tariq al-Tall (57 votes), Zuhayr al-Zumayli (56 votes), Sa'ud Abu-Mahfuz (55 votes), 'Abd-al-Rahim al-'Ukur (53 votes) and Ziyad Khalifah (49 votes—a reserve member)

The first meeting of the council was set for next Thursday during which several committees will be formed, mainly a legal committee that will investigate into contestations raised by some IAF members of the results of the Shura council that took place last week.

The IAF also issued a statement in which it condemns Vatican's recognition of the state of Israel that "denotes the submission of the spiritual leadership of the Christian followers to the Zionist domination."

The statement also called on all political parties and groupings in the Arab and Muslim world to denounce this recognition.

Muslim Brotherhood Plan To Merge With IAF Denied

PM0501095594 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 31 Dec 94 p1

[Unattributed report: "The Brotherhood in Jordan Denies Inclination To Merge With Action Front"]

[Text] Amman, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—'Abd-al-Majid Dhunaybat, deputy controller general of the Muslim Brotherhood group in Jordan, has denied the existence of internal differences over a proposal from the planning section for the dissolution of the group in order to merge it with the Islamic Action Front [IAF].

In a statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT yesterday, Dhunaybat said: This matter has become just an excuse. The fact is that there is nothing but a number of options which some thought should be studied, but they were not presented as a proposal.

He added: Every brother has a right to make suggestions and to think, but the option of dissolving the group and replacing it with a political party was never proposed.

Dhunaybat played down the dismissal of Ziyad Abu-Ghunaymah from the group, pointing out that he was dismissed for reasons of misconduct. Abu-Ghunaymah had been dismissed from the group while on a visit to the United States but he remained an IAF member.

A new IAF executive bureau, Shura Council chairman, and secretary general are due to be elected today.

Dhunaybat had earlier denied that the group had nominated anyone for the parliamentary elections held recently.

Six Leftist Parties Criticize 1994 Draft Budget

JN0401114294 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 4 Jan 94 p 3

[Special to the JORDAN TIMES by Suhayr 'Ubaydat]

[Text] Amman—Six leftist political parties Monday [3 January] criticised the JD [Jordanian dinars] 1,487 billion draft budget for 1994 and called on the Lower House of Parliament to reject it.

A joint statement issued by the six said the draft budget, which is under study by the Finance Committee of the House, placed the greater burden of economic reform on the poor and thus deepened the gap between the rich and poor.

The statement, a copy of which was made available to the JORDAN TIMES, was signed by the Jordanian Communist Party, the communist Arab Ba'th Party, the Jordanian Popular Unity Party, the Jordanian Democratic People's Party (Hashd), the Jordanian Socialist Democratic Party and the Jordanian Democratic Arab Party.

It called on the House to reject the draft budget, presented to parliament in mid-December by Finance Minister Sami Qammuh, and "defend the people's right to their daily bread,"

Listing its own version of the objectives of the country's economic policy, the statement said that economic development in the past two years did not justify the increase in local revenues (mainly from indirect taxes and fees).

The statement asserted that the expected introduction of a sales tax would "increase the production costs of the local industries and lead to a general price increase in market, and raise the poverty line..."

Other byproducts of the sales tax, according to the statement, will be a decline in demand for local products and investment and an increase in unemployment.

The statement called for a link between prices and wages and a minimum level of wages "in accordance with all related studies of living costs and the poverty line."

It claimed that the increase in the income and profit taxes came mainly from shareholding companies and employees, "which indicates that the percentage of tax evasion is still very high."

On expenditure, the statement claims that there is no serious attempt to reduce the deficit by decreasing expenditure, "rather it is about increasing revenues while maintaining the level of expenditure."

The statement said that the budget is not "deficit-free" as described by Mr. Qammuh, but that there is a deficit of JD 450 million "to be covered by local and foreign aid and loans."

The statement concluded by some suggestions to "treat the economic situation and the budget, including an increase in the salaries of active and retired civil servants and the military."

In his daily column which appeared in the Arabic daily AL-RA'Y Monday economist Fahd al-Fanik accused those advocating an increase in salaries as being "irresponsible."

He said that there is no guarantee that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) will reschedule Jordan's debts "regardless of our adherence to the economic reform programme, which includes decreasing the budget deficit."

Government, IMF Finalize 1994 Standby Accord

JN0501090394 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 5 Jan 94 p 3

[By a JORDAN TIMES staff reporter]

[Text] Amman—Jordan and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have finalised a standby agreement for the year 1994 as part of the economic restructuring programme the Kingdom is following since 1989, informed sources said Tuesday [4 January].

They said the main undertaking in the agreement was the introduction of a sales tax to replace a consumption tax before the end of next month and a reaffirmation of the Kingdom's moves to revamp the energy sector to make it cost-efficient.

The sources said no price increase of any commodity or fuel was envisaged in the letter of intent Jordan submitted to the IMF on the basis of which the standby agreement was finalised. The sources could not say whether the agreement was actually signed by the finance minister.

The accord now goes before the board of governors of the IMF and, immediately after approval, clears the way for Jordan to open fresh debt rescheduling talks with the Paris Club of creditor governments in February.

An IMF certification that a debtor country is following an economic restructuring programme is essential before international creditors agree to hold debt rescheduling talks.

The IMF green signal for Jordan will also clear the way for the Kingdom to seek external financing to service its debts, estimated to cost around $400 million. The financing is expected to be raised with help from the World Bank which convened a donors conference which produced $390 million in assistance to Jordan for the year 1993.

According to the sources, apart from undertaking to introduce the sales tax, the government renewed its commitment to ensuring that the Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) would be self-sufficient by the year 1995.

To achieve this end by improving the performance of the semi-autonomous JEA and developing the energy sector in general, the World Bank has extended an $80 million loan supported by a matching loan from the Japanese Government.

"No other major measures are envisaged in the standby agreement other than reaffirmation of Jordan's economic targets as set out in the restructuring programme," said a source familar with the negotiations that led to the finalisation of the document.

The source noted that Jordan has already complied with the IMF requirements of raising fuel prices and reducing subsidies among other measures envisaged in the economic restructuring programme.

Central Bank Lifts Credit Ceiling for Exporters

JN0501095594 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 5 Jan 94 pp 1, 5

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter P.V. Vivekanand]

[Text] Amman—The Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) Tuesday [4 January] announced the lifting of a ceiling on fresh credits that commercial banks could extend to exporters.

In a statement carried by the Jordan News Agency, PETRA, CBJ Governor Muhammad Sa'id al-Nabulsi said the management of the commercial banks could determine the volume of fresh credits they could grant to exporters.

The move, Dr. al-Nabulsi explained, means that the credits that banks may extend to exporters are not bound by the general ceiling on fresh credits during the year as agreed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the economic restructuring programme under way in Jordan.

He said the move came as part of the government's efforts to encourage exports and was adopted in light of "the positive changes witnessed in the monetary sector to conform to the CBJ's tendency to have indirect controls over credits facilities through the use of new monetary means such as certificates of deposits in Jordanian dinars."

Another recent move by the government to encourage exporters was the exemption of up to 70 per cent of exporters' profits from income tax.

Banking officials said they had received a CBJ circular informing of the relaxed credit regulations, which took effect as of Jan. 1, 1994.

Dr. al-Nabulsi said the new regulations also replace earlier standing rules which restricted banks from extending loans to not more than 10 times their capital and reserves.

In the context of credits for exporters known as packing credit in banking terms, the total amount extended should not exceed 90 per cent of the bank's reserves.

The general ceiling on fresh commercial credits set by the IMF for the year was JD 400 million—JD 335 million for the private sector and the rest for the public sector.

But the ceiling was broken as a result of high demand—the total of fresh commercial credit extended hit JD 360 million in the first seven months of the year—prompting the CBJ to introduce a series of restrictive measures.

The measures included the limits related to capital and reserves of commercial banks and the banks' involvement in trading in the Amman Financial Market.

Subsequently, the CBJ sought a higher ceiling and got IMF approval for another JD 60 million that could be extended during the last quarter of 1993 at a rate of JD 20 million per month. Banks which had already broken the ceiling were excluded from the addition.

However, bankers said the additional credit came too late for the market to utilise it since the financial year was drawing to a close.

The ceiling is set as a percentatge of the gross domestic product for the previous year.

The government has been trying to exclude credits extended for industrial investment from the ceiling, arguing that such investment had contributed to economic growth and would be reflected in terms of increase in the gross domestic product.

But the IMF argued that it was too early for such an exemption since Jordan was in the early stages of implementing the economic restructuring programme.

It was likely that the IMF would respond positively to the Jordanian request at a later stage in the second phase (1993-98) of the restructuring programme.

Defense Rests in Assassination Attempt Trial

JN0401112294 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 3 Jan 94 p 10

[Text] Amman (AP)—Defence lawyers Sunday [2 January] rested their case in the trial of 10 Jordanians accused of plotting to kill King Husayn, rejecting pretrial confessions and demanding the conditional release of the defendants.

Defence lawyer 'Umar Damrah, reading a 150-page summation, argued that the confessions were extracted under torture and as such could not be admitted as evidence.

He demanded that the court return an innocent verdict and release the defendants.

The State Security Court, a three-man military tribunal, will hold a "final review" of the case Jan. 9 and set a date for issuing the verdict, prosecution sources said.

Under standing orders of the court, the defendants and witnesses could not be identified by name in media reports. Two of the accused are being tried in absentia.

Five military cadets, a member of a guard unit of King Husayn and four others, including the two fugitives, are charged with plotting to assassinate the Monarch and pave the way for a take-over of power by the illegal Hizb al-Tahrir group.

Hizb al-Tahrir, a puritan group established in the early 50's, does not recognise any of the existing Arab governments and calls for the establishment of an Islamic caliphate.

The prosecution charges that the five cadets, students at Mu'ta University, a military college in south Jordan, were enlisted by Hizb al-Tahrir to open fire at the King during a guard of honour at a Mu'ta graduation ceremony on June 26.

The students were told that as soon as the King was killed, pre-positioned Hizb al-Tahrir members were to take over radio and television stations and seize power, according to prosector Muhammad Hijazi, an army major.

Mr. Damrah and other defence lawyers who addressed the court last week summed up that the accused were subject to "severe physical torture and psychological duress" to force them into signing the confessions.

The statements, given by the eight accused during three months of detention at the intelligence department, are one of the pillars of the prosecution's case.

All the defendants in court retracted the confessions and entered innocent pleas at the outset of the trial, which began in September.

The defence has also argued that Hizb al-Tahrir did not espouse violence as a means to achieve its objective, and as such the prosecution charges based on the group's ideology were invalid.

Prosecution witnesses have testified that the five cadets were devout Muslims who resented the pro-western "un-Islamic" policies of the government.

They also told the court that the five were ardent admirers of Lieutnant Khalid al-Islambuli, who assassinated Egyptian president Anwar al-Sadat Husni Mubarak [name as published] during a Cairo military parade in October 1981.

VOL Reports on Attempt To Assassinate al-Hirawi

NC0501080094 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 5 Jan 94

[Text] New information has surfaced about the attempt to assassinate President Ilyas al-Hirawi, the official denial of this attempt not withstanding.

Judge Riyad Tali' has issued an arrest warrant against Gh. T., formerly a security official in one of the militias, and two of his assistants, Sayid Sh. and Tony J.

The military authorities have also arrested a military man, Shirfan B., who plotted with the above suspects to assassinate President al-Hirawi when he was living in the temporary presidential residency in al-Ramlah al-Bayda' [in West Beirut].

Shirfan, an officer candidate in the Lebanese Army, agreed to work for Gh. T. in return for a sum of money. He constantly submitted reports on the activity of the presidential office, the details of the president's office and bedroom, and the times when he was present in his office. He also gave information on the names of the officers and members of presidential guard.

Judicial sources said Shirfan and Tony confessed under interrogation that Tony introduced Shirfan to Gh. T. and conferred with him several times in Burj al-Fidar in Jubayl. GH. T. explained to Shirfan how to place an explosive device in the president's office, either by booby-trapping the telephone or by putting the explosive device in a flower pot. Gh. T. promised Shirfan to give him a sum of money and to secure his travel to the United States.

Al-Hariri Goes to Damascus for Peace Talks

NC0401172394 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri left for Damascus at 1745 today to hold discussions on the peace negotiations with senior Syrian officials, especially as the Syrian-U.S. summit is approaching.

He will also discuss issues pertaining to Lebanese and Syrian water and electricity resources. He will chair some of the meetings of the Lebanese-Syrian Committee following up these issues. [passage omitted]

U.S. Security Team Reportedly To Visit Beirut

NC0501094994 Beirut AL-DIYAR in Arabic 28 Dec 93 p 1

[Report from Paris by Badra Bakhus al-Faghali]

[Text] AL-DIYAR has learned from informed Western sources that the U.S. Administration plans to dispatch a security team to Beirut to study the various aspects of the situation.

The security sources who reported this have not disclosed the date when the team is expected to arrive. They explained, however, that the major objective of this secret visit is to report on the actual security and political conditions in Lebanon so as to help the U.S. Administration decide whether to allow U.S. nationals to travel to Lebanon and resume flights between the two countries or to continue the present ban.

Cleric's Call for Mosque Opposed

NC0401212794 Paris AFP in English 1334 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Beirut, Jan 4 (AFP)—A storm has broken out over a Muslim cleric's call for a mosque to be built on the site where the Lebanese believe Jesus Christ turned water into wine in his first miracle.

The controversy comes five months ahead of a planned visit by Pope John Paul II.

Shaykh Ja'far al-Sayigh, a Shiite Muslim cleric in Qana, said over the weekend that a mosque should be built above a cave there which many Lebanese revere as the site where Christ changed water into wine during a wedding.

His call has also revived a centuries' old debate on whether the biblical Qana was located in Lebanon, east of the southern port of Tyre, or in the Galilee region of what is now northern Israel.

House Speaker Nabih Birri said that he took proof of the Lebanese claim when he was received by the pope in November at the Vatican.

Birri condemned the shaykh's call saying it was "very far from our traditions, our habits, our Islam and our Christianity."

"Qana is a symbol for us and we refuse to let it become a meeting place for extremism and fanaticism," he said.

Muslim clerics and Christian dignitaries have rallied to Birri's side.

"We must preserve the historical sites in the region of Qana al-Jalil, which represents a meeting place for the Christian and Muslim religions," said Shaykh Ali al-Amin, president of the Imam al-Sadr Institute for Islamic Studies.

He called on the inhabitants of Qana "to close ranks" against the mosque proposal.

"Land where Christ walked becomes sacred and we must preserve it," the cleric said.

The head of the Catholic Church in Tyre, Monsignor Yuhanna Haddad, praised Birri's position.

And the parish priest in Qana, Mikha'il 'Abbud, said troops were deployed around the cave over the weekend to protect the site.

The pope announced on December 21 plans to visit Lebanon in the first half of 1994. Vatican sources said the visit might take place in May or June. The pontiff is expected to visit south Lebanon during his visit.

[Beirut Radio Lebanon at 1630 GMT on 4 January adds the following: "Sidon's Ja'farite mufti Sayyid Muhammad Hasan al-Amin called on Shaykh Ja'far al-Sayigh and his aides to reconsider their decision to build a mosque in front of the historical cave of Qana to safeguard national coexistence, especially as the south has always embraced both Christian and Muslim values."

[In a related item in the same cast, the radio adds: "Chamber of Deputies member Muhamm[illegible] Qabbani has denounced recent incidents that occurred in the south and the north under the guise of religion, stressing that they were provoked by ignoramuses, not people of faith."

[Elsewhere, Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic at 1715 GMT on 4 January reports: "Minister of State Jean 'Ubayd today praised Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri's opposition to extremism and to what Birri described as waves of insanity.

[" 'Ubayd said Speaker Birri's stand against overzealousness and extremism expresses his patriotic and pan-Arab policy. Minister 'Ubayd called for reviving wisdom, strength, unity, and dignity in this country and nation. He called for silencing such voices and all those involved in schemes to partition the country and provoke infighting. 'Ubayd said he believes the state must prepare to confront such schemes by forging greater solidarity among its institutions and acting firmly and sternly against anyone who threatens the state's security, the homeland's unity, and the country's sanctities, liberties, and taboos."]

Khaddam Confers With Lebanese Prime Minister

JN0401190094 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri at 1930 today. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and Lebanese Water and Electricity Minister Ilyas Hubayqah.

Talks during the meeting dealt with the peace talks and relations between the two fraternal countries.

Khaddam Cited on Clinton-al-Asad Summit

JN0401134894 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Sana' al-Imam report from Damascus]

[Text] Syria has expressed the hope that the Clinton-al-Asad summit will produce positive results. Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam says that following Israel's agreement with the PLO, Syria informed the U.S. side that it did not agree to resume negotiations because Oslo constituted a deviation from the Madrid formula. However, subsequent contacts were held and an agreement was reached on a meeting between Presidents Clinton and al-Asad in Geneva, he added.

Khaddam asserted that Syria's position continues to be clear and the same, that peace must lead to implementing UN resolutions and to a comprehensive withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories.

Khaddam criticized the Israeli-Arab meetings under the name of multilaterals and repeated Syria's position on them. He indicated that such issues should not be discussed before the issue of peace and Israeli withdrawal is settled. Khaddam said Syria does not feel that it is weak otherwise it would not have gone to the peace negotiations. This is because the weak would enter negotiations at his expense and at the expense of his land, as he put it.

The Syrian vice president criticized the Oslo agreement, stressing the importance of a comprehensive solution on all fronts of struggle and said: Many attempts have been made to reach solutions with Syria for Syrian territory only. Syria rejected all these attempts because it is convinced of the pan-Arab nature of the struggle and the need for a comprehensive solution.

Media Views al-Asad-Clinton Summit, Peace Talks

'Ray of Hope' Seen in Summit

JN0201152994 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 2 Jan 94

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: Israel has blocked all the roads in the face of the peace march and prevented 1993 from becoming the year of the desired just and comprehensive peace in the region. Our region, however, is looking to 1994 with a ray of hope created by the decision to hold a summit meeting late this month between President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton. Much has been said about the importance of this meeting to peace prospects in the region, especially since it will take place in an atmosphere of foundering unilateral deals—deals which are being sought by Israel as an alternative to the comprehensive peace that Syria and the whole world are calling for.

Indubitably, U.S. President Bill Clinton would not have arranged this meeting if he does not have anything new to justify efforts to push the peace process forward and to revive the peoples' hopes that the required peace will prevail. Syria has always been eager to know if the U.S. Administration, which has opted to play the role of a full and effective partner in the peace process, has anything new to offer, especially since Syria has clarified its firm positions, as well as reiterated its adherence to peace and its refusal to relinquish any right.

This prompts many in the region, and throughout the world, to pin great hopes on the results of this summit. Many also fear, at the same time, that intrigues may be contrived before and during this summit to hamper efforts to reach such results. This, in fact, explains the expectations being spread these days that Israel may fabricate incidents, create tension before the summit, and prevent the realization of the hopes pinned to it.

Everyone knows that Israel will not be pleased to see efforts to strengthen relations between Syria and the United States or efforts to activate the U.S. role in achieving what Washington has committed itself to in accordance with the initiative it launched in Madrid, namely, the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace in accordance with the resolutions of the international legitimacy and the land-for-peace principle.

Everyone also knows the identity of those who are launching a feverish campaign against Syria, as well as the lies that these sides, which are known for their loyalty to Israel and the Zionist circles, are spreading against Syria in order to distort its reputation and affect world public opinion. They are particularly interested in damaging U.S. public opinion, which has begun to show more understanding of Syria's positions, its seriousness about peace, and its eagerness to establish peace on firm bases that will perpetuate the peace. This cannot be achieved without the comprehensive and just approach that Syria has been stressing.

These sides have been spreading their poisons since the summit was announced. The beginning of the campaign appeared in the questions journalists posed to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher when he announced the planned summit during a news conference in Damascus. The Syrian foreign minister described the questions at that time as prefabricated, and Christopher refused to answer them.

In light of the failure of that campaign, which, as we have said, is backed by Israel and the supporters of its deception abroad, and amid the confusion and failure of unilateral deals, we are seeing expectations and fears that Israel and its supporters may resort to more wicked and effective ways to fabricate problems and create tension in the region in order to block the ray of hope emanating from the upcoming Syrian-American summit.

By this, we do not want to overestimate Israel's capability and potential. However, paying attention to such possibilities will certainly help contain them and deprive Israel of any chance. Israel appears determined to continue its policy, which has proven to be a total failure, and to abort the great prospects that the Syrian-American summit will provide by opening the door for a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

U.S. Role in Peace Process Viewed

JN0301080794 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 3 Jan 94

[From the press review]

[Text] Commenting on the awaited summit between President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton, AL-BA'TH says: Arab and foreign political quarters and news media have continued to talk about the awaited summit between Presidents al-Asad and Clinton. These quarters have stressed the importance of this summit for the peace process, noting what it could offer to achieve a just, comprehensive peace in the region if the U.S. Administration shows understanding of the facts of the conflict in the region. As these quarters believe, it is no longer acceptable for the U.S. position to remain within a theoretical framework. This is especially so, since the U.S. Administration is the party that launched the peace process on the basis of UN resolutions and the principle of land for peace.

More than two years have passed since the peace process was launched. Israel, however, has continued to play the same role, namely, refusing to comply with international resolutions and the foundations of the peace process. This resulted in wasting an opportunity deemed by observers as historic when the Madrid conference convened and then resumed in Washington.

AL-BA'TH adds: Unlike the Arab parties, Israel went to the Madrid conference and the Washington talks not to commit itself to the foundations of the Madrid conference but to exploit the peace talks to achieve its aims which it has sought for a long time through various means. Therefore, the peace talks have not made progress because of this Israeli attitude.

The paper thinks that the recent U.S. move came after the U.S. Administration felt that the entire peace process was in danger, especially since it is now convinced—this is apparent through official statements—that partial, separate solutions would never achieve genuine peace.

Consequently, AL-BA'TH adds, the U.S. Administration insists always that comprehensive settlement in the region would bring peace, security, and stability to the region and that any peace without Syria and Lebanon is not considered peace. The summit between Presidents al-Asad and Clinton this month comes against this background. It is presumed, as Arab and foreign quarters point out, that this summit will focus on the need to salvage the peace process which is threatened by Israel's position. These quarters assert, moreover, that it all depends on the U.S. Administration's position, especially since Syria has a very clear position on the peace process and is very much concerned about achieving a just and comprehensive settlement.

'Defects' in PLO-Israeli Accord Noted

JN0301163794 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: Israeli officials have expressed hope that the expected talks between President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton in Geneva in the middle of this month will result in tangible progress that will help implement the Palestinian-Israeli agreement on which negotiations were held in Oslo. The objective of the Israeli officials' insinuations is to place part of the blame on Syria for the stumbling of the aforementioned agreement. Syria, along with the world, truly wants to push along the peace process in the Middle East on entrenched, just, and comprehensive bases. However, it did not act to foil the Oslo agreement, especially since it bears enough defects and gaps to preclude its own succeed. The agreement, as everyone knows, has provoked Palestinians inside and outside the occupied Arab territories. It has also provoked Arab feelings. This agreement has seriously relinquished the national rights of an entire people, given the Israelis a free hand in the occupied territories, ignored Jerusalem and the issue of settlements, and constituted a serious precedent in the region. The Arab parties participating in the Madrid conference and Washington talks have agreed on a just and comprehensive peace based on the implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions on all the fronts of the conflict in a way that restores the usurped rights and all the occupied territories. The agreement did not ignore the Palestinian people only, but it also ignored all the Arabs in general, and Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan in particular. It is natural that many sides have expressed reservations on this agreement, especially since it constitutes a separate deal that essentially conflicts with the bases of a just and comprehensive peace agreed upon at the Damascus, Amman, and Beirut meetings.

The truth is that the events that have occurred since the signing of the agreement, including the recent lengthy talks in Taba, Oslo, Paris, and Cairo, have revealed to all sides that the Palestinian side was dragged into a well-planned trap. No sooner had the Israelis hinted at some temptations than it hastened to sign an ambiguous

agreement, which seeks to achieve peace in appearance, but in essence, it seeks to entrench occupation and settlements, and to subjugate the Palestinian people to further pressure and coercion. The withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho has turned into a redeployment of forces, the Jericho District has turned into a small, isolated, and besieged city, and the self-rule into a true ghetto through which the Israelis control the border, the crossings, the roads, and the strategic areas, and fully monitor the Palestinians' movements.

Despite the recent tough negotiations to give some positive attributes to a negative agreement, the Israelis did not budge an inch. As the Palestinian side admitted, they were dictating their terms and deciding what should be and what should not be. So, the stumbling of the Gaza-Jericho plan is attributed to two main things; namely, to the serious defects it contains, and the Israelis' intransigence.

The truth is that by concluding such a separate deal, Israel sought to deal a blow to the entire peace process which started in Madrid and continued in Washington, through torpedoing its bases and excluding the UN Security Council resolutions adopted as its basis. This is because Israel does not want to withdraw from the occupied territories. It believes that occupation and peace can go together. Based on this, it refused to withdraw its forces from Gaza and Jericho and negotiated with the Palestinian side on every meter in the Jericho area. The relevant question is: If Jericho required all these negotiations, taking into consideration that it is a small town, how would the case be concerning the big Palestinian cities in the West Bank. It is fully clear to everyone that the Israeli intransigence, which uses security as a cover, seeks to entrench occupation, usurpation, expansion, and settlements. The intransigence we see in the Oslo agreement negotiations is only part of Israel's multifarious maneuverings, which are aimed at foiling the entire peace process.

Israel is blackmailing the Palestinian side in a very serious manner. It is also exploiting its weakness, which was the result of its deviation from Arab consensus and involvement in partial and separate settlements, in order to dictate to it on its humiliating terms. If we have lessons to learn from this stumbling agreement, then we clearly see that Israel is utterly separated from peace and that it has not yet dissociated itself from the objectives of expansion and settlements. This issue will certainly be discussed by Presidents al-Asad and Clinton in Geneva. All past events proved that peace in the region hinges on Israel's full withdrawal from the occupied territories and on the restoration of all Arab rights. No agreement will be of any value, regardless of the propaganda surrounding it, if it is not just and fair and if it does not meet Arab aspirations to restore their rights and territories. In fact, such agreement will turn into an obstacle to peace.

Syria has frequently said that peace goes with justice, and that peace and occupation cannot go together. If Israel refuses to free itself of delusions and expansionist plans in order to move to the world of peace, right, and justice, then the international community will be required to assume its responsibilities—to clarify matters and to take whatever steps are necessary to implement its resolutions and to end the Israeli intransigence. Peace is the issue of all peoples, and an aggressive entity must not be allowed to endanger mankind as a result of its insistence on its aggressive course.

Preliminary Talks in Washington Viewed

JN0401154894 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1234 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: The heads of the Syrian and Lebanese delegations to the peace talks are holding preliminary consultations with the U.S. Administration in Washington on the overall peace process and the obstacles facing it on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. These consultations are also aimed at exploring the possibilities for activating the stalled negotiations in light of the full and fair partner role that the United States has pledged to play.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher proposed these preliminary consultations as part of other measures designed to end the stalemate in the peace process. It is noteworthy that even before the ink on the Oslo agreement dried, Israel announced that it was not presently interested in promoting the peace efforts on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. Israel also said that peace was achieved in the region in the wake of the Oslo agreement, and that the Syrian and Lebanese tracks can wait.

The Israeli deception did not last long because this agreement remained mere ink on paper. Moreover, the contradictions of this agreement soon surfaced, and Syria once again occupies a prominent position. Syria's role will continue to be a central one because it is essential to both the peace process and the Middle East region.

The United States acknowledged Syria's basic role when it sent its secretary of state to the region in order to discuss rescuing the peace process, and also when it arranged for the upcoming summit in Geneva between President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton.

It is natural for the Israelis to cast doubt on the Syrian-U.S. summit, just as they usually do. The Israelis are looking forward to encircling and belittling the Syrian role and undermining the possibility of a deep Syrian-U.S. understanding on the aspired Middle East peace and on the need to establish it on firm bases, so it would stand fast in the face of various events and developments.

The Israelis widely publicized the Gaza-Jericho agreement. However, the events that followed this agreement have shown that this agreement is a group of ambiguous principles and that reaching further agreements on these

principles would need months of painstaking negotiations. Events have also shown that the peace process has retreated several steps backward instead of moving one step forward, and that there is no alternative to the return to the bases of the Madrid conference, the Washington talks, and the formula of a just and comprehensive peace on all tracks of the conflict, based on both the Security Council resolutions and the principle of exchanging land for peace.

As the Gaza-Jericho agreement faces a real impasse, the Israelis have appealed to the United States to intercede with Syria in order to render this agreement a success. It is to be recalled that this agreement has carried the seeds of failure since the very beginning because it is a separate deal, which conflicts with the objective of a just and comprehensive peace, and it does not achieve the Palestinian people's rights. Moreover, Israel has shown great intransigence and arrogance, thus increasing the conviction that it does not want to withdraw from the occupied territories and that it is using the agreement to strike at the intifadah—with Palestinian hands if possible.

Thus, the demonstrated Israeli desire for Syrian flexibility are no more than deception. Israel was the party that lured the Palestinian side into concluding a separate deal. Israel is also the party that imposes its condition on the Palestinian side and refuses to show any flexibility. As was the case two years ago, Israel stands as an obstacle to the opportunities of a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

Syria, along with other Arabs, has called on Israel to achieve a just, comprehensive, and honorable solution based on a principle on which the world was unanimous; namely, the exchange of land for peace. In return for Israeli withdrawal from all occupied territories, Israel would reap the fruit of peace on all tracks without exception. Contrary to its allegations, Israel's withdrawal does not entitle it to concessions because the occupied territories are Arab lands, and because the Security Council resolutions provide for withdrawal and frankly reject occupation, annexation, and the building of settlements.

Since the Washington talks began, however, Israel has undermined all the opportunities for a real peace, rejected various offers and proposals, and insisted on the policy of separate deals. This policy can make neither peace nor even a truce. Hence, both the resumption of the Washington talks and the activation of the march toward a comprehensive Middle East peace depend on Israel.

Neither Syria nor Lebanon will listen to Israel to conclude separate deals. Israel, however, will receive a favorable response if it really seeks an honorable, comprehensive, and just peace. We do not believe that any world state, including the United States, differs with Syrian opinion on the need to establish a just and comprehensive peace. All parties now agree that there will be no peace if it is not a just and comprehensive one. This is the significance of both the preliminary talks in Washington and the upcoming Syrian-U.S. summit. As has been the case since the convening of the Madrid conference, the ball remains solely in the Israeli court.

Press Views PLO-Israel Dispute

JN0501121194 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 5 Jan 94

[From the press review]

[Text] The newspaper AL-BA'TH says: Regional developments have shown the soundness and precision of the Syrian position toward the Middle East peace process. Syria believes that the desired peace can only be achieved within the context of international legitimacy and the Arab unity of ranks. Likewise, Syria believes that this peace must ensure the restoration of all Arab territorial and political rights. There should be neither abandonment of any such rights, nor bargaining over any such rights.

AL-BA'TH adds: These principles could have created an international pressure that might have made the Zionist entity abandon its provocative and intransigent positions. Such pressure could also have created the propitious objective circumstances needed to achieve just and comprehensive peace. However, these principles have been immensely undermined by the PLO's decision to depart from Arab consensus and jump to deals with Israel, believing that this unilateral approach, which was manifested in the conclusion of the Gaza-Jericho accord, would help it make some gains. However, what has happened is quite the opposite. For, the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations have confirmed that it is only Israel which emerged as the winner. The Oslo agreement has begun to collapse under Zionist pressures. Even the flawed and fragile autonomy accord appears to be rejected by the Israelis.

Concluding its commentary, AL-BA'TH says: These fast-breaking regional developments have revealed the cards of all parties to the peace process. They have shown that any attempts to violate the principles of peace is doomed to failure, and that any such attempts will hurt the Arabs' pan-Arab interests. All this highlights Syria's redemptive role in this crucial phase of the Arab nation's history, and renders the imminent Geneva summit, due to be held between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Bill Clinton, an important opportunity for ending the stalemate plaguing the peace process.

For its part, the newspaper TISHRIN addresses the world's hopes for the success of the Syrian-U.S. summit due to be held in Geneva in mid-January, as well as the disappointment caused by the consequences of the Oslo agreement.

TISHRIN says: Israeli Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer has inaugurated a new neighborhood in the Qatzrin settlement in the occupied Syrian Golan. The Israeli minister pledged to work to promote and expand Zionist settlements in the Golan, something which shows

that this provocative act is part of efforts to scuttle the peace process, sabotage the U.S. peace initiative, thwart the al-Asad-Clinton summit in advance, and present to the United States and the world community a fait accompli.

TISHRIN adds: Since the signing of the Oslo accord, Israel has attempted to delude the world in general and the United States in particular into believing that peace has been realized in the region, that the Palestine question has been resolved, and that peace efforts on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks can wait. Likewise, it has striven to marginalize Syria's role, obscure the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, and promote separate deals, such as the Gaza-Jericho accord, instead of comprehensive peace.

TISHRIN goes on to say: However, deception was short-lived. For Secretary of State Christopher has commended Syria's primary role in the peace process and arranged a summit between Presidents al-Asad and Clinton. Since the news of the summit was announced, the Israelis have been casting doubts on its usefulness and leaking deceptive reports on an alleged Syria role in this or that incident. In the aftermath of the failure of their maneuvers in this regard, they have initiated a provocation that has taken the form of encouraging Zionist settlers to settle in the Golan and pledging aid to expand the existing settlements in the hope of confusing the Clinton Administration.

TISHRIN indicates that the entire world is fully aware that Middle East peace cannot be achieved in the absence of an effective Syrian involvement, and that peace with Syria is contingent upon the restoration of all occupied Golan territory, and the dismantlement of settlements there.

Concluding its commentary, TISHRIN says: The Golan is Syrian territory, and will remain so regardless of how many settlements Israel builds there. Moreover, Syria will not abandon a single inch of Golan territory. Certainly, there will be neither a regional peace, nor a peace with Syria unless all Golan territory is returned to its rightful owners.

The newspaper AL-THAWRAH addresses the Oslo agreement, which was concluded more than four months ago, saying that it has failed to produce any tangible results. The regional developments which have unfolded since the signing of the accord have shown that the accord has failed to bring peace to the Palestinian people or the region, the paper argues. Worse still, by way of this accord, Israel has managed to dissociate the PLO from the Palestinian people and its pan-Arab depth and surroundings, namely, Syria and other frontline Arab states. This accord has, indeed, legimitized Israel's aggression and occupation. The alleged differences being promoted on the provisions of the Oslo deal, the interpretations and implementation of this deal, and the intransigent PLO and Israeli stands are all parts of a campaign of contrived maneuvering and deception designed to promote the credibility of both Israel and the PLO with their constituencies after the deal has failed to bring the region closer to peace.

AL-THAWRAH adds: Under all circumstances, the PLO looks like the only loser. As for the Palestinian people and Arabs, they are also big losers in all this. This is because the Oslo agreement consecrates the final liquidation of the Palestine question and replaces the Palestinian people's aspirations, as well as their legitimate right to build an independent state on Palestinian national soil, with control over a municipality whose borders will remain confined to the area of Gaza and Jericho.

Concluding its commentary, AL-THAWRAH notes the approach of Rabin, who is humiliating the PLO and its leaders by reiterating the intransigent Israeli positions with regard to control over border crossings and security and negotiations on Israeli terms. If Israeli terms and positions are not accepted by the PLO, his government is not in a hurry to conclude an agreement with it, as Rabin put it. All this shows the futility of unilateral deals, as well as their failure to bring just and comprehensive peace, which must result in complete Israeli withdrawal on all fronts.

Afghanistan

Envoy to Egypt Details Foiling of 'Coup'

NC0401174794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1630 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 4 Jan (MENA)—Afghan Ambassador in Cairo Mohammad Sadeq Saljuqi has stated that yesterday he received a phone message from Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani to convey to President Husni Mubarak on the situation in Afghanistan, which began to return to normal today. At a news conference at the Afghan Embassy in Cairo at noon today, he said the message explains the scale of the coup scheme hatched by the coalition of Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar, communist leader General 'Abdol Rashid Dostam, and former Soviet agent Mahmud Barialay to seize power.

Ambassador Saljuqi said that on 1 January, Hekmatyar fired thousands of missiles at Kabul to support and protect the communists and Dostam's militiamen, causing heavy losses in Kabul. He said that according to reports from Kabul today, the state forces are completely in control and have forced the communist coalition forces to retreat from the areas they controlled before the offensive. He stressed that Kabul Airport has been purged of communist elements after they suffered heavy losses—200 dead, 300 captured, and 12 tanks seized. He asserted that the Mazar-e Sharif airport has been put under control. The northern areas of the Qeysar, (Sherghan), and Mazar-e Sharif are being purged. He pointed out that President Rabbani has declared jihad against the communists and their allies. The Afghan ambassador categorically denied that President Rabbani had fled abroad and stressed that he did not leave Kabul. Ambassador Saljuqi said the perpetrators of the coup have split and fled and specific areas are being purged.

On a call by writers and thinkers for the Islamic Conference Organization to intercede to establish stability in Afghanistan, Saljuqi said there is a dispute between a legitimate government and elements opposed to the government, so the situation does not require intercession by any friendly party. He noted that Pakistan and Iran expressed readiness to help keep the elements in check. He said Afghanistan accuses no party regarding the funding of these elements, but he noted the country's deteriorating economy. He said Afghanistan is suffering starvation and is in dire need of food aid in particular. He noted that the Afghan Government appealed to the international community and friendly countries to provide food aid.

Bangladesh

Central Bank Devalues Taka Currency

BK0201060894 Hong Kong AFP in English 0558 GMT 2 Jan 94

[Text] Dhaka, Jan 2 (AFP)—The Bangladesh taka was devalued Sunday against the US dollar to minimise the trade gap and increase exports, an official of the Bangladesh Bank said.

The central bank, in a statement, said the new exchange rate was fixed at 39.97 taka for buying and 40.17 taka for selling, effective Sunday, a normal working day in Muslim Bangladesh. The previous rates were 39.75 taka and 39.99 taka.

The FINANCIAL EXPRESS newspaper said that although the taka was "very stable," the devaluation would minimise the trade gap and increase exports.

In the year to December 1993, the taka was devalued by two per cent, the newspaper said.

India

Dixit: Kashmir 'Ball' in 'Pakistan Court'

BK0401145294 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] New Delhi today reiterated its commitment to continue bilateral discussions with Pakistan to resolve all outstanding issues. The foreign secretary, Mr. J.N. Dixit, said that India is not resigned to the end of bilateral exercise and it is committed to peace process without any precondition. Talking to newsmen in New Delhi this evening, he said that the long discussions he had with the Pakistan prime minister, Ms. Benazir Bhutto, shows that she wants to give a signal to keep the momentum of bilateral interaction at all necessary levels.

Admitting that the talks have ended in a stalemate, Mr. Dixit said the ball is, however, in the Pakistan court as they have not agreed to a timeframe for the next round of discussion. Mr. Dixit said while Pakistan insisted during the talks that Kashmir should be the core issue to improve bilateral relations, India asserted that the wide ranging bilateral issue should not hinge on one problem.

The foreign secretary disclosed that he had offered specific proposals to improve bilateral ties and his Pakistan counterpart Mr. Shaharyar Khan had agreed to consider them.

Mr. Dixit rejected reports in Pakistan press that India has agreed to resume bilateral talks on Kashmir because of pressure from abroad and the problem has become unmanageable. He said New Delhi has the capability to tackle the problem and there is no question of succumbing to pressures in areas where the nation's fundamental interests are involved.

BJP Urges Government Report on Kashmir Talks

BK0401125694 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] says the government should take political parties into confidence and apprise them of the details of the foreign secretary-level talks held between India and Pakistan. Talking to newsmen in New Delhi today, the party spokesman, Mr. K.L. Sharma, also wanted the government to spell out its

future course of action as Islamabad seems to have taken an unreasonable attitude at the talks.

PRC Policy on Kashmir Outlined During Visit

BK0401161094 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] China is not in favor of any form of independence for Jammu and Kashmir. The Chinese feelings over the Kashmir issue were conveyed to Islamabad prior to the India-Pakistan foreign secretary level talks which concluded yesterday. Reports say that China had made it clear to the Pakistan prime minister, Ms. Benazir Bhutto, when she visited Beijing last month, that China would like a negotiated solution of the Kashmir issue and is opposed to any form of independence which some separatist groups desire.

Governor Notes Successes Against Militants

BK0501033294 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 5 Jan 94

[Text] The Jammu and Kashmir governor, General K.V. Krishna Rao, says security forces are maintaining a strict vigil all along the Line of Control to foil any attempts to push more militants into the state from across the border. Speaking at a high-level meeting in Jammu yesterday, he said that the pressure on militants is continuing, and security forces are achieving continuous successes against the militants in the Kashmir Valley, as also in Doda District of Jammu region. Gen. Rao said people are also extending their full cooperation to the security forces in their anti-insurgency operations in the state.

New Foreign Policy Initiatives Viewed

BK0501114394 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 28 Dec 93 pp 1,16

[Article by M.K. Dhar

[Text] New Delhi, 27 Dec. Having suffered several diplomatic reverses in the current year, the Government of India is planning new initiatives in the new year to neutralise the negative impact abroad of many internal political developments that have put the country on the defensive.

Since the Prime Minister has been discharging the duties of the Foreign Minister also on account of Mr. Dinesh Singh's indisposition, indications are that a change is in the offing in the stewardsh'p of the External Affairs Ministry. Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao now realised that Mr. Dinesh Singh's indisposition has affected his mobility at a time when India is under severe pressure internationally on the minorities issue, human rights, non- proliferation etc. and needs to respond vigorously at all international forums.

Foreign policy reverses culminated in the cancellation of the G-15 summit, about whose objectives the External Affairs Ministry's top brass was not at all clear. Apart from the protocol arrangements, not much thought was given to making the gathering purposeful nor were any new approaches to the problems of developing countries sought to be defined in an era of new economic groupings.

The draft declaration approved by the G-15 Foreign Ministers makes dismal reading and strikes no new path. The three heads of Government of Indonesia, Zimbabwe, and Malaysia saw the inadequacy of the document and deferred its consideration. With senior officials of the External Affairs Ministry having realised how irrelevant the G-15 had become, nothing could be done to bring the foreign dignitaries to New Delhi.

The traumatic religio-ethnic experience through which the country has been passing for over a year, leading to upsurge, communal violence, bomb blasts of unprecedented severity, escalated terrorist violence in Kashmir leading to retaliatory action by the security forces, have had a negative impact on external relations. The Government has not been able to derive full advantage from the economic reforms because of political uncertainty at home, the securities scam which has brought about the Finance Minister's resignation, the question mark till recently on the Congress Party's performance in the elections to the five State Assemblies, escalated extremist violence and growth of fissiparous tendencies.

Pakistan has taken full advantage of the ethnic situation and developments in Kashmir and together with other members of the Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) forced India into a defensive position at all international gatherings, including the United Nations.

The change of administration in the United States has increased pressure as regards human rights, non-proliferation, technology transfer, environment and Kashmir, Indo-U.S. relations received a severe jolt, though both sides are now playing it cool. However, External Affairs Ministry sources insist that the Government, while adjusting its foreign policy to the realities of the new international situation, has succeeded in protecting India's economic, political and territorial interests despite adverse circumstances. Even with regard to technology transfer, the country's had been safeguarded despite embargos.

"With no country is it possible to have a totally smooth relationship because we do not toe anybody's line. We have a structured and calibrated equation with each country. Relations with others cannot always be smooth because India is a large and complex country." It is also argued that the Ministry did not get the political leadership it deserved in such crucial times when the whole international scenario has changed and old equations are no longer relevant.

It is admitted that the Prime Minister's personal initiatives helped the country to further stabilise relations with China, Iran, Israel and South Africa the last two were only recently accorded diplomatic recognition. A whole gamut of possibilities has opened up with the

Central Asian republics, though relations with Russia are again passing through an uncertain phase after the cancellation of the cryogenic rocket-engine deal.

In the new year, priority will be accorded to normalising relations with Pakistan and addressing the Kashmir question and the exercise will begin with the meeting of the foreign secretaries of the two countries. The United States has created enough confusion over Kashmir and even Pakistan is now cool to suggestions from Washington regarding possible solutions to the Kashmir issue. It will be India's endeavour to keep the dialogue with Pakistan going on substantive issues while hoping that external sponsorship of terrorism in Kashmir will cease.

The reverses suffered by the Bharatiya Janata Party in the recent Assembly elections have sent out the message that India will not abandon its secular principles and that a solution of the Babri mosque controversy will be evolved soon.

The second priority will be to expand relations with the European Union (EU) with which a political dialogue is to be had to give additional weightage to the agreement on an upgraded relationship with it. Most EU members are to be reassured of political stability in India and also the determination to pursue market reforms with vigour to attract more investment and joint ventures which are still at a very low level. High technology flow also needs to be accelerated.

Relations with neighbours, except Pakistan, are good and will be further developed. Attention is being given to resolving the Ganga waters issue with Bangladesh and a meeting between Begum Khaleda Zia and Mr. Narasimha Rao is expected to materialise next year, which may help ease the tension on this score. Relations with Tehran which is supportive of India's case on Kashmir, are to develop further and a land link established between India and the Central Asian republics through Iran for free flow of trade and commerce.

The pressure on India to sign the NPT [Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty] and subscribe to the MTCR [Missile Technology Control Regime] which have somewhat abated may again grow. India is expected to stand firm by its commitment to universal non-proliferation, as opposed to the discriminatory regime, and press for a major review of the NPT in 1995. India is also to make it clear that it will not roll back its missile development plan in the face of China's missile, including ICBM capability and Pakistan's IRBM programme, which is backed by China's technical expertise. Concern over China's arms export policy is heightened by the fact that weapons flows to Pakistan (which is soon to be taken off the Pressler book) will increase Islamabad's belligerence. In view of its desire to expand economic cooperation with the Asia-Pacific region, India will seek closer relations with ASEAN countries or terms of greater liberalisation of it economy. Most ASEAN countries appear keen to be business with India and strengthen its economy lest China becomes an economic giant and in future, constitutes a military threat to the region as a whole.

Uzbek's Karimov, Rao Hold News Conference

BK0501091094 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 5 Jan 94

[Text] India and Uzbekistan have expressed serious concern over the rising fundamentalism and cross-border terrorism. Addressing the joint press conference in New Delhi today, the visiting Uzbekistan president, Mr. Karimov, and the prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao, said these forces disrupt the democratic fabric of the nations and there is need to cooperate in tackling the vexed problem.

Mr. Narasimha Rao said the discussions with the Uzbekistan president covered several matters, including bilateral cooperation and nonalignment. Both the leaders expressed the resolve to step up economic cooperation and trade between the two countries. Similar emphasis will also be given to strengthen ties in other fields, including culture.

Mr. Karimov said that there is great scope for Indian enterprises to export consumer goods and set up joint ventures in many fields. He said of the 960 joint ventures now in operation in his country, only 14 are of Indo-Uzbek cooperation. Replying to questions, Mr. Karimov said that the Kashmir issue should be resolved through negotiations and without any external interference. He was also of the view that the complex Afghan problem should be tackled by the United Nations.

Earlier, both sides signed six agreement to expand cooperation in several areas.

Uzbek Economic, Political Ties Considered

BK0501113194 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 5 Jan 94

[Sidharth Kanengo commentary]

[Text] Ties between India and Uzbekistan, which date back to ancient years, [break in reception lasting several seconds] the visit of the Uzbek president, Mr. Islam A. Karimov. The visit, resulting in a series of agreements and memorandum of understanding between both the countries, besides high-level deliberations, is bound to take their bilateral relations to new heights in the new year. The Uzbekistan, the land of the builders of India's historic Taj Mahal, offers a very lucrative mosaic of opportunities to Indian entrepreneurs, businessmen, and industrialists. It is time for Indian businessmen to give up inhibitions and invest in this former Soviet republic known for gas deposits, coal reserves, non-ferrous metals and gold. Now pursuing the path of a free market economy, Uzbekistan is witnessing considerable foreign investment flow. The changed global scenario definitely demands Indian businessmen to break the barrier and

tap the available opportunities in the land where people also love Indian films and adore Raj Kapoor, the doyen of Indian cinema.

As Mr. Karimov put it after his arrival in New Delhi on Monday, he would not like Indian businessmen to be left behind. Besides strengthening cooperation in economic areas, the two countries can launch a joint offensive against fundamentalism and extremism with India playing a greater role in Central Asian region in political fields as well. During his meeting with the Indian president, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, the Uzbek president said that the disintegration of the Soviet Union had created a vacuum in Central Asian region. India has a special relationship with the countries of the region when Europeans and other countries are to get a foothold. [sentence as heard] The agreements and memorandums of understanding now being entered between the two countries involve cooperation in economic and other areas, including telecommunications, science and technology, culture, and transport and transit. The Uzbek president earlier held formal talks with the Indian prime minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, and discussed bilateral issues with several Indian ministers. India had recently extended a credit of $10 million for setting up projects with Indian know-how and entrepreneurial participation in Uzbekistan. Projects worth $7.8 billion [as heard] for Uzbekistan have also been approved in addition. Uzbek personnel are being trained in India in disciplines such as diplomacy, banking, management and mass communication. In the area of joint ventures, the two countries are also producing electronic and brass wares. India's (Thapar Group) is also to set up a cotton yarn plant in Uzbekistan.

Close interaction between the top leaders of both the countries has been on ever since the Central Asian Republics attained independence two years ago. While New Delhi was the first city that Uzbek president, Mr. Karimov, visited outside the Commonwealth of Independent States in 1991 after his country decided to break away from the former USSR, Indian Prime Minister Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao reciprocated the gesture in May last year when he chose Uzbekistan as his first destination within the CIS as prime minister. Only last year, five agreements on cooperation in science and technology, tourism, avoidance of double taxation and cooperation between the foreign offices of the two countries were signed during the visit of the Uzbek deputy prime minister, Mr. (T.M. Miryakubov). Mr. Karimov, accompanied by a delegation from Uzbekistan, including the foreign minister and chairman of board of dealing with trade like industry, economic relations, civil aviation and tourism met leading Indian industrialists and entrepreneurs to explore possible@areas of cooperation. This visit is likely to open a new era in India-Uzbekistan links with this Central Asian country creating conditions for mutually beneficial cooperation and encouraging ties with foreign companies, firms and financial institutions.

Joint Exercises Called 'Threat' to Positions

BK0501033694 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 5 Jan 94

[Text] The five-week long joint exercise by the special forces of Pakistan and the United States begins today. It is to be conducted on the high mountain range north of Peshawar in the North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan. Special forces are commandos trained in paratrooping skills and swift decisive action behind enemy lines.

Defense experts feel that the joint exercises pose a threat to Indian positions on Siachen. The experts also say that the joint naval and military exercises with littoral states in the Indian Ocean have become a means for the perpetuation of U.S. military presence in the region.

Agni Missile Test Scheduled for 7 Jan

BK0401160294 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] India's medium-range missile Agni will be test fired on Friday [7 January] from Chandipur in Orissa. According to a notification issued in Balasore yesterday, the third test firing of the surface-to-surface missile would be done between 0900 [0330 GMT] to 1600 [1030 GMT]. The Agni was first test fired at Chandipur on 22 May 1989.

Iran

Official Comments on Prisoners, Foreign 'Spy'

LD0501114794 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 5 Jan 94

[Excerpts] State Prosecutor General Musavi-Tabrizi took part in a news conference today. [passage omitted]

Making a positive evaluation of the situation of prisoners in the country's jails, the prosecutor-general said that at present, 70 percent of prisoners are narcotics' smugglers and addicts. The remaining 30 percent are convicted of general offenses such as murder, robbery, and social corruption, and a few are minigroup members. Considering the population in Iran, the number of prisoners are less than in other countries. [passage omitted]

The prosecutor general added: The trial of a foreign spy has ended and he has been sentenced to death.

Death Sentence 'Confirmed'

LD0501120994 Hamburg DPA in German 1116 GMT 5 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran (DPA)—The death sentence against the German engineer Helmut Szimkus for spying for Iraq has been confirmed by the highest court in Iran. This was announced by the Iranian State Prosecutor General

Musavi-Tabrizi to journalists in Tehran today. Szimkus can only be pardoned by the revolutionary leader Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i.

Szimkus was arrested in Iran in 1989 and was sentenced to death for spying for Baghdad in 1992. The German has allegedly confessed to having spied for Iraq. Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel has appealed to Iran on the condemned man's behalf.

IRNA Confirms Identity of 'Spy'

LD0501143094 Tehran IRNA in English 1327 GMT 5 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 5, IRNA—Death sentence on German national, Helmut Szimkus, arrested and convicted of spying for Iraq two years ago has been upheld by the Supreme Court, Prosecutor General Ayatollah Abolfazl Musavi Tabrizi said here Wednesday.

"Only the leader of the Islamic revolution Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i can pardon him (Szimkus)," Musavi Tabrizi told reporters.

A German delegation headed by Deputy Justice Minister Rainer Funke arrived in Iran a few months ago to request clemency for the German spy from Iranian officials.

The prosecutor general said that Funke's request that German spy be pardoned has not been sent to the leader of the Islamic revolution for his decision.

On anti-narcotics campaign, Ayatollah Musavi Tabrizi said that a special joint law enforcement and army unit has succeeded in tightly controlling the borders and preventing entry of international drug traffickers and narcotic drugs.

He added that 70 percent of prisoners have been convicted of drug related offences.

The ayatollah said that poppy cultivation in Pakistan and Afghanistan, bordering Iran on the east, was one of the main reasons for smuggling in of these drugs to Iran and added that Islamabad and Kabul governments should pay careful attention to the destructive outcome of poppy cultivation.

Ayatollah Musavi Tabrizi added that by sealing off Iran's eastern borders, 70 percent of the anti-narcotics campaign has been completed.

Foreign Minister on Karabakh, South Africa

Envoy Sent To Mediate

NC0401195494 Paris AFP in English 1337 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran, Jan 4 (AFP)—Iran is to resume its efforts to end the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Azerbaijan and the Armenians, Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati said Tuesday [4 January].

In an interview with RESALAT newspaper, Velayati said an envoy would travel to the region on Thursday to resume mediation at the request of both sides.

Armenian Foreign Minister Vahan Papazyan urged Iran to renew its efforts to end the five-year war over the breakaway Armenian-majority enclave of Karabakh in western Azerbaijan.

Azeri Foreign Minister Gasan Gasanov also asked Iran, during a visit in December, to help end the conflict which has cost some 15,000 lives.

Iran, which has its own Azeri population of 10 million and an Armenian community of 250,000, tried but failed to end the conflict in 1992, and has since repeatedly offered to mediate.

Fighting in the enclave flared in 1988. After a year of military defeats, the Azeri army launched a counter-offensive on December 18.

Velayati on South African Sanctions

NC0401195694 Paris AFP in English 1820 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Tehran, Jan 4 (AFP)—The African National Congress [ANC] and other South African organisations have asked Iran to lift sanctions, Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati said.

Velayati, quoted on Tuesday [4 January] by RESALAT newspaper, said Iran believed the developments in South Africa "are real and apartheid is being dismantled."

"These groups have asked us to end economic sanctions against their country," Velayati said, naming only the ANC. [passage omitted]

Ties To Be Established With South Africa

LD0501175694 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1730 GMT 5 Jan 94

[Excerpt] According to a cabinet decision today, the Islamic Republic of Iran will be establishing diplomatic relations with the Government of South Africa.

According to our correspondent, the decision was made after the resolution of the racial discrimination problem in South Africa, which was realized as a result of the indefatigable struggles by that country's blacks as well as a decision by the African Unity Conference and requests by South African Muslims and political groups, especially Nelson Mandela, and the Front Line states.

The cabinet has instructed the Foreign Ministry to pave the way for lifting the trade embargo against that country and regulating relations between the two countries. [passage omitted]

Velayati, Turkmen Vice President Discuss Ties

LD0501173094 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 5 Jan 94

[Text] The second round of talks between Turkmen Vice President Boris Shikhmuradov and Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati was held in Tehran today.

In these talks Mr. Shikhmuradov said his country was ready to expand ties in all fields. He also said the two countries shared many common aspects. He then called for efforts to carry out research in the history of relations between the two countries.

Welcoming the proposal, Mr. Velayati said the Foreign Ministry's office of political studies had carried out a great deal of research in that field. He then proposed that researchers should be sent to Tehran from Turkmenistan to further study the topic, a proposal that was accepted by the other party.

National Security Council Meets

LD0401163294 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Today's meeting of the National Security Council, which was chaired by the interior minister, reviewed the latest political and security situation in the western parts of the country as well as the process of confrontation against criminal elements. Necessary decisions were adopted.

The state public prosecutor also submitted a report about his visit to the country's eastern areas and praised the local officials for their careful supervision over the eastern borders and their efforts to prevent the passage of large convoys of narcotics smugglers through these borders.

President Visits Ailing Ayatollah Ardebili

LD0501090794 Tehran IRNA in English 0811 GMT 5 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 5, IRNA—President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani paid a visit to the ailing Ayatollah Abdolkarim Musavi Ardebili in Khatam-ol-Anbiya hospital Tuesday [4 January] night.

The president prayed to the Almighty God for his immediate recovery. He was also briefed on the efforts carried out by the doctors and medical team treating the ayatollah.

Ayatollah Ardebili, a Tehran substitute Friday prayer leader and former judiciary chief, was taken to hospital last week after suffering an apoplectic stroke.

Reports on Arrest of Ayatollah Rowhani Denied

LD0501151294 Tehran IRNA in English 1449 GMT 5 Jan 94

[Text] Qom, Jan. 5, IRNA—Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohammad 'Ali Rowhani on Wednesday denied a REUTER news despatch alleging that his father Ayatollah Mohammad Rowhani had been arrested.

He told IRNA that his father as usual delivered his daily lectures at the theological school today.

REUTER in a news despatch today quoted an Iranian dissident Mahdi Haeri as claiming that Ayatollah Rowhani had been arrested and taken to an unknown place by Iranian security agents.

The claim of Ayatollah Rowhani's detention was also denied by the commander of a law enforcement headquarters in this holy city.

Wheat Output Rises, Imports Cut

LD0301163894 Tehran IRNA in English 1601 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] Kerman, Jan. 3, IRNA—Iran produced 10.8 million tons of wheat this year, an increase of 3.8 million tons compared to 1988, Deputy Agriculture Minister Jalal Rasulof said Monday [3 January].

He said despite the fact that Iran's population has increased by six million over the past six years, imports of wheat has dropped form five million tons a year to 2.5 million tons a year.

In the course of the first five-year economic development plan, launched in 1988, imports of rice, sugar and barley fell by 300,000, 400,000 and 500,000 tons respectively, he said.

The deputy agriculture minister said a total of 18 million tons of various crops were produced in the country between 1988 to 1992.

The Agriculture Ministry conducted 6,500 research projects and provided training courses for six million farmers during the first economic development plan, he said.

Commentary Views PKK, Turkish Clashes in Brussels

NC0401213194 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Turkish 1630 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Unattributed commentary: "Clashes Between Turks and Kurds in Brussels"]

[Text] Dear listeners, hundreds of Turks attacked a group of Kurds in Brussels early on 2 January. The Kurds were preparing for a demonstration. Reports said that the Turks tried to obstruct some 200 Kurds from organizing a demonstration in the northern part of the city. A clash broke out and 11 people were hurt.

According to political circles, one of the reasons for the recent clashes between the Turks and the pro-Kurdish Workers Party [PKK] supporters in Germany is the continuation of the pro-PKK activities in that country. Although the German Government banned the activities of the PKK and the organizations affiliated with it in November 1993, the PKK supporters have maintained their activities to a certain degree. Most probably, that state of affairs has made the Turkish Government uneasy.

Considering their political relations with Turkey, Germany and several other countries in Europe decided to obstruct the PKK's activities toward the end of 1993. However, the measures they took were not enough to completely obstruct the PKK. Several experts on Turkey are convinced that the supporters of the Turkish Government in Europe are trying to help Turkey obstruct the PKK activities, regardless of the effective measures Ankara has taken against that organization. In view of that, the incidents in Brussels can be assessed from that viewpoint as well. Needless to say, similar incidents may occur in various parts of Europe in the future.

The Turkish Government is trying to get PKK's activities under control by improving diplomatic relations with Western countries, particularly those in which that organization is active. Furthermore, it uses its military forces to crush the PKK in Turkey. However, intellectual circles are convinced that both Turkey and the PKK must adopt a moderate approach and make a more serious effort to hold talks to resolve their problem.

Pakistan

Foreign Minister Reiterates Demands on Kashmir

BK0401143494 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] The foreign minister, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, today briefed the Kashmiri leaders about the two-day foreign secretary level talks [with India] which ended in Islamabad. He gave them the background of the talks and said Pakistan reiterated its principled stand that the Kashmir problem must be resolved on the basis of UN resolutions which provide for holding plebiscite for the realization of the right of self-determination to the people of Jammu and Kashmir. The foreign minister regretted that the Indian side did not show any flexibility on any aspect of the issue. He, however, informed that New Delhi has formulated specific proposals on various issues, including security of the Line of Control, Siachen, Wullar Barrage, Sir Creek and nuclear nonproliferation. The foreign minister told the Kashmidi leaders that Pakistan informed the Indian side that our response to their specific proposals would be conveyed after these proposals have been received and examined on their merit and in the light of ground realities in Jammu and Kashmir. The president and prime minister of AJK [Azad Jammu and Kashmir] and leaders of various political parties of Kashmir were present in the briefing.

Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali also spoke to PTV correspondent Habibullah Farooqi on the outcome of the Pakistan-India Talks:

[Begin recording] [Farooqi] The secretary-level talks between India and Pakistan has produced no result. The Indian foreign secretary has termed the UN resolutions on Kashmir as irrelevant. What are your comments?

[Ali] My comments are that principles do not become irrelevant. It is the principle of the UN Resolution 242 which is timeless, universal and will always remain dynamic. If the UN resolutions according to the Indian foreign secretary are irrelevant, then the Simla Agreement is also irrelevant. That is our position.

One significant thing that happened in the talks was that out of four sessions of the talks—the seventh round of talks, two and half sessions were used just for discussion on the Kashmir problem—Indian-held Kashmir dispute. This is a significant improvement in the sense that at least the Indians are now admitting that it is a very serious problem. Regarding our position, we have said so very clearly that there cannot be any compromise on our position. We will continue to support the Kashmiri people diplomatically, politically, and we will keep the option of using international forums as and when we think it is necessary for the support of the Kashmiri people. But our main thrust and emphasis is that they must improve the ground situation in Kashmir. They must not indulge in human rights violations. They must lift the siege of the Hazratbal shrine and they must release the leaders of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference. Only if we see some improvement in the ground [situation] in Kashmir, then and then only we will agree to the future agenda of the talks. [end recording]

Kashmir Committee Chairman Criticizes India

BK0401163094 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] The chairman of the Kashmir Committee of the National Assembly, Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan, has called upon the United Nations to fulfill its obligation for the implementation of its resolution which was adopted unanimously for a plebiscite in Kashmir which was also supported by the late Indian prime minister, Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru. In an interview with Radio Pakistan's representative in Lahore tonight, he said the world opinion should also take note of the Indian attitude who always attended the dialogue on the Kashmir issue just to gain the time. He said after the announcement of the seventh round of talks at the foreign secretaries level, a new wave of brutality and torture was initiated by the Indian forces in occupied Kashmir.

Commentaries Examine Issues on Kashmir

Internationalization Urged

BK0501100394 Islamabad THE NATION in English 5 Jan 94 p 6

[Editorial: "Seventh Round and After"]

[Text] The seventh round of India-Pakistan talks, notwithstanding inclusion of Kashmir as a separate agenda, has been, to say the least, a non-starter. When he arrived in Islamabad to renew the Foreign Secretaries talks exercise, J.N. Dixit was all smiles and, for a change, willing to acknowledge Kashmir as a disputed territory. He especially flew to Karachi to meet the Prime Minister as if he was on a mission of serious business. But, what has actually transpired at the negotiations table is a reaffirmation of the view that there has been no real change in New Delhi's stance on Kashmir, and the offer to have talks on Kashmir was basically a ploy to hoodwink world opinion. 'We told you so', the Opposition would say, and persist in accusing the government of 'miscalculation' and 'mismanagement'. And the government will have to reckon with the charge that we have let the Indians get off the hook by acquiescing in the farce of Kashmir talks, more so because Islamabad had called off its initiative at the UN to facilitate the holding of the seventh round. Not that the Foreign Office had raised any false hopes about a breakthrough, notwithstanding the Prime Minister's comment that New Delhi's willingness to discuss Kashmir was a 'significant development'. It had, on the contrary, made it quite clear that it did not expect the Indians to depart from their official position to make any major concessions on Kashmir. The outcome of the seventh round has thus been what was being anticipated in Islamabad. Nevertheless, what calls for a convincing explanation is whether or not the hasty decision to hold back the UN resolution on human rights violations in IHK was worth the 'dirty game' the Indians have played on us on the pretense of accepting Kashmir as a disputed territory.

Where do we go now from the debacle of bilateral approach to the Kashmir dispute, is the question that needs to be address by the government. We are told by the Foreign Office that it was necessary to go through the drill of talks on Kashmir to convince our friends abroad that we were willing to negotiate with India all the outstanding disputes. But, the Indians, being past masters of running international propaganda campaigns, are not likely to miss the opportunity to hold Pakistan responsible for the deadlock. In any case they have been successful in creating confusion and misgivings in the name of bilateral talks, in the ranks of freedom fighters. Islamabad has clearly brought the message home that no talks at the Foreign Secretaries, or any other level, will be scheduled unless there is a visible de-escalation of oppression let loose by the Indians in the Kashmir Valley. It is admittedly a principled stand, and should dispel the Opposition's apprehension that there may have been a sell-out on Kashmir. Refusal to delink other outstanding problems from the 'core issue' has demonstrated that the government is not prone to buying the so-called 'step by step diplomacy' at the cost of consigning the Kashmir question to limbo. What has emerged as an imperative of ground reality is to renew, with all the resources at our command, a concerted bid to internationalise the Kashmir question, no matter how annoying it may be to New Delhi.

More Aggressive Diplomacy Urged

BK0501092294 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 5 Jan 94 p 7

[Editorial: "Pakistan needs to spruce up its diplomacy"]

[Text] The failure of the seventh round of secretary-level talks between Pakistan and India has not come as a surprise. It was expected that the Indians would reiterate their well-known position on Kashmir that the UNCIP's [UN Commission for India and Pakistan] resolutions on the issue were no longer relevant. Equally predictable was Pakistan's response that any efficacious solution to the Kashmir problem must be sought within the framework of these resolutions. As both sides stuck to their own positions, the talks could not but founder on the rock of disagreement on Kashmir. And though the joint statement issued at the end of the seventh round mentions the possibility of the continuation of talks, no date has been fixed for these. This itself is a tacit admission of the growing futility of negotiations at the foreign secretary-level. The outcome of the talks could, however, have been different had the Indians not come to the negotiating table with an agenda which did not leave any room for compromise. One indication of this was a statement by Dinesh Singh, India's minister for external affairs, on the eve of the talks, parroting the old theme of Kashmir being part of India. The Indians, in fact, had sealed the fate of the seventh round before it had even begun.

But the intransigence and obduracy are the hallmarks of Indian diplomacy that for long have blighted the prospects of peace in the South Asian region. And though it is important to keep this factor in view while dealing with Delhi, more significant is to devise an effective, long-term counter to this Indian attitude. Sadly, so far our foreign office mandarins have failed to come up with such a strategy. Their flaccid response to India's intense diplomatic moves on Kashmir is a testimony to this fact. The Indians, despite committing some of the worst crimes against humanity in Kashmir, have been trying hard, with some success, to convince the world that they have a case on Kashmir. Pakistan, on the other hand, has not been able to elicit a positive response from the world community, even though its stand on Kashmir is much stronger and more cogent than Delhi's. This failure becomes all the more glaring if seen in the light of the fact that in today's world no State can violate human rights with impunity and not incur international odium and censure. But thanks to our diplomatic fecklessness, Delhi has been able to perform the are feat of killing

Kashmiris and feigning innocence in the court of international public opinion at the same time.

The failure of the seventh round of secretary-level talks should be an occasion for our policy makers to draw a long-term India policy with clear cut and well-defined goals; one of which should be to not let world focus shift from Delhi's oppression in Kashmir. Once the goals have been defined, all diplomatic efforts should be geared towards achieving these. More crucially, the political leadership now has to realise that foreign policy is too serious a business to be left to erring bureaucrats. Difficult political problems, whether domestic or foreign, are best dealt with at the political level.

Nation 'Bent Backwards' for India

BK0501095994 Peshawar THE FRONTIER POST in English 5 Jan 94 p 10

[Editorial: "Stand-Off Over Kashmir"]

[Text] Not entirely contrary to expectations, the round of secretary-level talks between India and Pakistan over Kashmir has ended without any breakthrough over the issue. Pakistan was not interested in a gradualist approach favoured by India that sought to focus attention on what are issues more amenable to a solution, such as Siachen and Waller barrage, etc. The contention here could well be that such an approach is an unaffordable luxury given the high level of on-going repression in the Kashmir valley by Indian forces numbering over half a million. A concession in the context of Siachen, for instance, could easily be used as a ploy by India to reassure interational opinion while seeking to consolidate its hold on Kashmir through brutal force. The talks have failed to register progress but Pakistan has shown some flexibility by choosing not to rule out completely the option of continuing to use the mode of bilateral dialogue for finding a solution to the issue. It has, however, introduced a note of firmness by linking the posssibility of holding another round of bilateral negotiations with India to visible and concrete improvement of conditions on the ground, such as a reduction in Indian troop strength in the Valley, release of the large number of Kashmiri leaders jailed by India, etc. It is unfortunate that India has held on to its rigid position on Kashmir thereby reducing virtually to nought the effect of its earlier more accommodative stance illustrated by agreeing to place Kashmir as a separate item on the agenda of Pak-India talks. This, in turn, left Pakistan with no option but to stick closely to the previously stated position on Kashmir and other related issues.

As for the criticism emanating from opposition quarters to the effect that Pakistan would have been better off not acceding to India's request to withdraw the proposed resolution it was to present before the UN General Assembly condemning it for gross violation of human rights in Kashmir, it appears motivated once again by a desire to score points, notwithstanding the sensitive nature of the issue. Quite apart from the fact that Pakistan has reserved its right to take up the matter at the United Nations at any time it deems appropriate, it must be kept in mind that the proposed resolution on human rights violations in Kashmir being passed in the General Assembly would not, in any way, have been binding on India. The idea was to bring the issue into focus and make that country a subject of moral censure by the international community. It can certainly be argued that in following the path that Pakistan has, international attention has, indeed, been focused on Kashmir and India has been shown up as not being entirely sincere in its desire to find a solution to the Kashmir issue. While India has thereby been put on the defensive, Pakistan is in a position to say to the international community, including the Security Council members, that it had bent backwards to accommodate India and if the talks have not yielded positive results, it should be clear where the fault lies.

Foreign Minister Conveys Offer To Assist Kabul

BK0401145894 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Heavy fighting resumed in Kabul today after a brief lull because of snowfall. Reports say government forces are besieging General Dostam's stronghold of Microryan and have inflicted heavy casualties. Fighting was concentrated near an important Dostam base. Clashes have also been reported from a nearby sports stadium. Witnesses said the fighting resumed around noon when the fog lifted. In the eastern district of Kabul, Golboddin forces allied with Dostam troops are reported to be advancing on Qila Zaman about 3 km from the capital Kabul. The fighting has left several hundred dead or wounded and thousands homeless. The International Committee of the Red Cross in Kabul said essential supplies have become scarce.

Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali's reaction on the Afghanistan situation.

[Begin Asif Ali recording] We are all actually very very disturbed at what is happening there, because precious Muslim blood is being shed. That is what becomes even more painful to us. I was about to leave for Afghanistan today, but for this fighting that has erupted there. I am still prepared to go and I have conveyed to Afghan Government and brother Afghan leaders that if they want us and even under these conditions, I am prepared to go to Afghanistan and make an offer of our good offices so that the fighting can end and the bloodshed can end. Because, the people of Afghanistan, they deserve to get peace in that country now. [sentence as heard] [end recording]

Urges Dialogue To End Afghan Fighting

BK0501030294 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 5 Jan 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali has expressed sincere concern over the fighting in Afghanistan, saying that it is not a viable option to resolve

political differences. In a statement issued in Islamabad yesterday, he called on all Afghan parties to initiate the process of dialogue for national reconciliation. He said the need of the hour is peace, understanding, and reconstruction in Afghanistan, so that the valiant people of that country could benefit from the fruits of the holy war. The foreign minister said Pakistan is of the firm view that the military triumph of any one faction over the other will be of a transient nature, and it may further exacerbate regional, ethnic, and linguistic tension and may undermine Afghanistan's unity and regional peace. He said it is very important for all regional countries, especially for Pakistan, to ensure that civil war is replaced by peace in Afghanistan. He said we believe this objective can be achieved through the process of negotiations and broad consensus. Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali said he is ready to visit Afghanistan if the Afghan leadership responds positively.

Foreign Ministry Spokesman on Afghan Fighting

BK0501111894 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 5 Jan 94

[Text] Pakistan is asking all the Afghan parties through all available channels to halt fighting and work for the restoration of peace and reconstruction in Afghanistan. Answering questions by newsmen about the fighting in Afghanistan, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said latest reports say that the fighting is continuing between the forces of General Rashid Dostam and those of Mr. Ahmad Shah Mas'ud. Asked to comment on the reports that Pakistan has closed borders to stop the supply of food and fuel, the spokesman said Pakistan has reviewed the situation in the light of the fighting. He said Pakistan does not want to help any party or a new flow of refugees from across the border. He, however, said there is no question of sealing the border, which is so long and difficult.

Azerbaijan Seeks Better Economic Relations

BK0401043194 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 4 Jan 94

[Text] Azerbaijan has expressed its desire to establish better economic relations with Pakistan. This was stated by Azerbaijan Foreign Minister Gasanov while addressing the members of the Executive Committee of the Pakistan Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Karachi yesterday. He assured the Pakistani traders that every possible assistance will be provided to them in promoting bilateral trade relations. He called on the Pakistani businessmen to take advantage of the huge market for machines and daily consumer goods in Azerbaijan.

No Extradition Assured for Arab Militants

BK0501100994 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 5 Jan 94 p 12

[Text] Islamabad, Jan 4—Arab militants and welfare workers giving a helping hand to Afghan jehad face no immediate threat of extradition to their motherland, an Interior Ministry official stated. There is no immediate solution to the problem of these foreign nationals and the apparent moves initiated by the government from time to time seem a futile exercise. Nothing concrete could be achieved in the past nor are there any chances of success in future.

Most of these Arabs, primarily Egyptians, Tunisians and Algerians, are engaged with various non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working for the welfare and rehabilitation of the Afghan refugees across the NWFP [North West Frontier Province]. Their major concentration is in Peshawar.

Recently there have been serious allegations against these foreigners for their involvement in a number of terrorist activities in their mother countries. Pakistan it is learnt, has come under quite a lot of pressure from those countries following the increased militant activities, including bomb explosions and armed attacks on the government officials as well as on the foreign visitors by the religious groups.

However, the dilemma was that Egyptian, Tunisian and Algerian nationals cannot be extradited even if their respective government formally demand because there is no extradition treaty between Pakistan and these countries. A senior Interior Ministry source explained that these foreign nationals can only be arrested under the Foreigners Act for their illegal entry or over-stay in Pakistan. They can be tried in the court of law and punished for these offences but can't be extradited to their countries forcibly.

"The legal process is that we can deport them to the country where these people may wish to go and that for only if that country is willing to accept them. If no other country is ready to welcome them, then they must remain in jails. The process also involves the concerned embassy officials and the Foreign Office", the Interior Ministry official said.

He also said that there were hardly 300 to 400 such foreign nationals now working with various Afghan groups and in international NGOs [non-governmental organizations] helping the rehabilitation of the Afghan refugees. He said that the government has no plans to initiate any action against these NGOs because they are working on humanitarian basis to help the displaced Afghans. These NGOs are also a big [word indistinct] factor for the resettlement and rehabilitation of the Afghan refugees, he added.

The official said that all the foreign nationals engage with these NGOs are under close watch. However, as they manoevre across the border [word indistinct] freely, it is very difficult to keep track of them. "Still our agencies are keeping an eye on their activities", he said.

The officials dispelled all apprehensions about a major action against the NGOs working for the Afghan refuges. It is out of question. They are helping the refugees a great

deal and are of great assistance to the Government as such. However, any foreign national found illegally staying in the country will be dealt with appropriately", he warned.

Editorial Denies U.S. Accusation Against ISI

BK0201105394 Rawalpindi NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu 2 Jan 94 p 10

[Editorial: "The False Accusation Against the ISI"]

[Text] A U.S. House committee has charged that Pakistan's Inter Service Intelligence—ISI—is engaged in terrorist activities in Indian Punjab, occupied Kashmir, and Uttar Pradesh. In a report, it said that the Pakistani ISI is now carrying out terrorist operations in India with groups that were organized by Pakistan during the Afghan war.

The accusation by the U.S. task force against Pakistan is very regrettable. As for India, it has always made such allegations against Pakistan, and everyone knows the reason behind it. However, the U.S. attempt to extend a helping hand to India deserves condemnation. We hope that the Pakistani Foreign Office will take note of this accusation and lodge a protest with the United States. In fact, the Indian agency, Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), is involved in terrorism in Pakistan and has already killed a number of innocent people. It is well known throughout the world that the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) is engaged in laying a network of conspiracies in other countries. Also, the Israeli secret agency called "Mosad" is in collaboration with India's RAW engaging in conspiracies against Pakistan. However, the United States does not consider the activities of any of these organizations objectionable. All its wrath is directed against the ISI, which only keeps an eye on foreign agents in Pakistan.

We would like to request that Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto take note of this accusation. At one time Pakistan used to be accused of involvement in disturbances in east Punjab and occupied Kashmir only, but attempts are being made now to put the blame on Pakistan for the disturbances in Uttar Pradesh, too. If we do not take note of this accusation, then the United States will start accusing ISI of terrorist acts anywhere in the world. We hope that our Foreign Office will not remain silent and that it will emphatically reject the blame.

Editorial Urges Steps To Ensure Defense

BK0201125994 Rawalpindi JANG in Urdu 23 Dec 93 p 3

[Editorial: "Requirements of National Defense"]

[Text] The Defense Committee of the federal cabinet at its meeting chaired by Prime Minister Ms. Benazir Bhutto on 21 December discussed a long agenda that included the country's defense, national security, the latest situation in Kashmir, strengthening of the defense capability of the three services, effects of suspended U.S. aid, recommendations for the purchase of arms from various countries, and financial matters of the armed forces. It was the first meeting of the Defense Committee after the new government assumed office. At the meeting, the prime minister assured the chiefs of armed services that the government would fulfill all their requirements at any cost because the country's defense is among the government's top priorities. The meeting decided that Pakistan would not depend on any one country to meet its defense needs; instead the country's defense resources would be diversified.

A glance at the issues discussed by the cabinet's Defense Committee indicates that a comprehensive review of Pakistan's defense matters was made at the meeting. Such a review is very important and inevitable for a country like Pakistan as its defense is always faced with serious danger. Although a ray of hope has emerged in the last two months about an improvement of relations with the United States, it is, however, premature to predict about the final decision of the U.S. Government on Pakistan's military and economic assistance.

The U.S. Government is reportedly considering some proposals to make the Pressler Amendment ineffective. However, it is not possible to say anything definitely now about the U.S. Congress' final decision on these proposals. In the meantime, Pakistan cannot sit idly and do nothing to meet its defense needs, especially when it is dealing with an unfriendly neighbor. The neighbor appears to be unwilling to adopt a positive and fair attitude on the Kashmir issue. On the contrary, it is increasing all sorts of repression and violence as the struggle by the Kashmiri freedom fighters is intensifying.

A few weeks ago India decided to resume talks with Pakistan, but it has not been witnessed making any effort for the success of these talks. It has intensified its atrocities. Having such a neighbor, how can Pakistan remain complacent, even slightly, about its defense? In view of the Indian attitude, the foreign minister has already expressed his pessimism about the outcome of the proposed talks. Armed Forces Chief General Abdul Waheed has expressed the view at the cabinet Defense Committee meeting that distressed by the situation in Kashmir, India might even embark on an adventure on the Kashmir frontier. The army chief's opinion is a realistic one. We should never adopt an attitude of complacency and indifference regarding India's designs.

We should endeavor to meet our defense needs from every possible source and maintain full preparedness while simultaneously expecting an improvement in our relations with the United States. The holy Koran also advises Muslims to do everything possible for the defense and not to ignore it. Some uninformed quarters in Pakistan complain about an increased expenditure on defense. They forget that if a nation's defense system is not strong, it cannot expect any leniency or softness from its enemy. We understand that the Defense Committee has adopted a realistic approach by deciding to acquire arms and equipment from Europe, China and any other

possible source to meet the defense requirements of the three services of Pakistan. This is a correct decision.

Pakistan has repeatedly made the proposal to declare South Asia a nuclear-free zone. But the Indian desponse has always been negative. Keeping this negative attitude in view, one can easily realize what designs India is nurturing. We hope that all the decisions of the Defense Committee will be fully implemented and no effort will be spared in making Pakistan's defense impregnable.

Also, we would like to make it clear that a country's defense cannot be made impregnable by merely amassing weapons and equipment. The country should also have a broad and strong industrial base and a self-reliant economy, and it should move toward the goal of self-reliance and have a stable and smooth political system. While striving to acquire weapons and equipment for our armed forces, we should also take effective steps for the country's economic and industrial progress.

Similarly, we should also make every possible effort to ensure the country's political stability and continuity. By the grace of God, Pakistan has vast resources. If we utilize these resources with prudence and far-sightedness, then there is no reason we should not be able to effectively defend our motherland and raise the living standard of our people, too. We hope that the new elected government will initiate a process of reconstruction and reforms in all aspects of our national life.

Murtaza Bhutto's Backers Demonstrate in Larkana

BK0501122394 Hong Kong AFP in English 1048 GMT 5 Jan 94

[Text] Larkana, Pakistan, Jan 5 (AFP)—At least one person was killed and six others wounded when police fired on several hundred supporters of Murtaza Bhutto, brother of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, near the family's ancestral home here Wednesday, hospital and police sources said.

Police claimed demonstrators had opened fire first.

The crowds had gathered at the family's Al-Murtaza residence in Larkana to take part in ceremonies marking the 66th anniversary of the birth of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, former Pakistan leader and founder of the ruling Pakistan People's Party, who was hanged in 1979.

Fearing clashes between rival Bhutto family factions, police had cordoned off the premises and set up check points in the city to prevent Murtaza's backers from reaching the graveyard where his father is buried until after Benazir Bhutto had paid her respects.

Murtaza, arrested in November on charges of terrorism during the 11-year rule of late general Mohammed Zia-ul-Haq, was refused parole to visit the grave by a Karachi court.

A slogan-chanting crowd suddenly emerged from Al-Murtaza, where Benazir Bhutto's estranged mother Nusrat Bhutto was staying, and tried to march to the grave site 17 kilometers (10 miles) away, witnesses said.

Another group from the city tried to link up by forcing their way through a police barricade towards the residence.

Senior Superintendent of Police, Bashir Memon, said police opened fire only after they were fired on by demonstrators, an allegation denied by sources close to Nusrat Bhutto.

Her spokesman said the premises came under a "hail of bullets" and witnesses said numerous bullet marks could be seen in the gate and walls of the house.

"The incident was worse than anything experienced in the darkest days of Ziaul-Haq," said one of her supporters.

Members of her personal staff, whose hands were stained with blood, claimed at least two of the wounded were shot inside the family compound.

"One of the boys injured in the incident was shot in the back while he was talking to someone at the gate. The car trying to take him to hospital was also fired upon by the police," said provincial Senator Makhdoom Khaliquzzaman.

Police had surrounded the house, allowing no one in or out, after reports that Nusrat Bhutto was planning to go to the grave in a procession, officials said.

"For security reasons we could not allow miscreants to accompany Begum Nusrat Bhutto," to the Garhi Khuda Bakhsh graveyard, said Memon.

During the clashes two police were seized by demonstrators. One was still being held, said police chief Memon.

Earlier Benazir Bhutto had visited her father's grave amid top security. Police ringed the graveyard within a radius of 20 kilometers (12 miles). She was accompanied by members of the Pakistan People's Party's central executive committee, federal ministers and MPs.

Tight security kept reporters away from the premier who appeared composed. She stayed about 30 minutes and left without incident.

The Bhutto family has become increasingly divided in recent months. Benazir has kept her distance from Murtaza since his return to Pakistan in November from 16 years of self-exile in Syria. Her mother, however, has actively supported him.

The two women clashed last month when Benazir ousted her mother from the presidency of the ruling people's party. Nusrat maintained that her husband before he died had made her the party's president for life.

It was not clear whether Nusrat would go later to pray at her husband's gave.

"She is ill and running a high temperature, said her spokesman.

Sri Lanka

Lt. Gen. de Silva Assumes Command of Army

BK0201114994 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 2 Jan 94

[Text] The need to reorganize the command and control structure of the Army and providing thorough training to troops have been emphasized by the new army commander, Lieutenant General Gerry de Silva, when he assumed command of the Army yesterday. At the ceremonial taking over of command held at the Army Headquarters, Lieutenant General Gerry de Silva, told newsmen that manpower resources is the main obstacle that the Army have to face. He noted that welfare measures of the troops should be improved to a greater extent. The training of troops and reorganizing the army commanding control are now being reviewed. Adequate war materials including modern vehicles with sophisticated equipment are essential factors to win a battle. This is also vital for a greater mobility to improve the ground forces. The army commander assured every possible action to remedy the past setbacks and weaknesses to gain victory in the northeast battlefront in the future. He expressed hope that with the cooperation of all and concerted efforts the armed forces will be able to achieve success to restore peace and stability to the country.

Air Force Bombs LTTE Meeting

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[Text] Nine terrorists were reported killed and 50 wounded when Sri Lanka Air Force planes attacked a gathering of LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] terrorists presided by its leader Velupillai Prabhakaran at Chavacachcheri in the Northern Jaffna peninsula last Thursday [as heard]. A military spokesman told LANKAPUVATH that the terrorists had gathered to unveil the statue of their deputy leader and Prabhakaran's first cousin Krishnakumar alias Kittu in Chavacachcheri town and acting on intelligence reports the Air Force bombed the Kittu commemoration meeting. He said that it is still not known as to who was killed and as to who was wounded in the incident.

Meanwhile, Prabhakaran's political wing leader Mahendraraja alias Mahattaya and [name indistinct] have been sentenced to death and are due to be executed on January 15th, according to reports.

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